

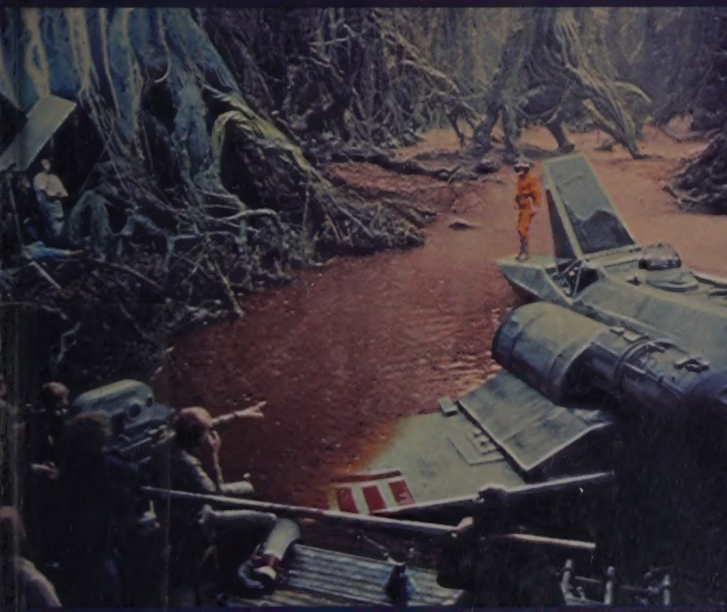
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ONCE UPON A GALAXY:
A Journal of The Making of

STAR
THE
EMPIRE
STRIKES BACK

WARS™



by Alan Arnold

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STAR **THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK** WAR™

Starring

**Mark
Hamill**

**Harrison
Ford**

**Carrie
Fisher**

**Billy Dee
Williams**

**Anthony
Daniels**
as C-3PO

Co-starring

**David
Prowse**
as Darth Vader

**Kenny
Baker**
as R2-D2

**Peter
Mayhew**
as Chewbacca

**Frank
Oz**
as Yoda

**Directed by
Irvin Kershner**

**Produced by
Gary Kurtz**

**Screenplay by
Leigh Brackett and
Lawrence Kasdan**

**Story by
George Lucas**

**Executive Producer
George Lucas**

**Music by
John Williams**

**Production Designer
Norman Reynolds**

**Conceptual Artist
Ralph McQuarrie**

**Director of Photography
Peter Suschitzky**

**Film Editor
Paul Hirsch**

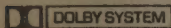
**Special Visual Effects
Brian Johnson and Richard Edlund**

Filmed In Panavision®—Color by Rank Film Laboratories

A Lucasfilm Ltd. Production—A Twentieth Century-Fox Release

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Recorded In Dolby Stereo



TM



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LEARNING RESOURCES CENTER



A Del Rey Book

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FOREWORD

To set the scene for this journal and to establish its point of view, I must go back to the summer of 1977. I was with a film unit in Greece when reports began to reach us of an extraordinary movie that had taken America by storm. Some of the technicians on location had worked on the film the previous year and were surprised, even puzzled, by these reports. They could not explain the fever developing around what was being called, for want of a better term, a space fantasy, nor the fact that in American cities people were lining the streets for blocks to see it—and going back again.

The film, of course, was *Star Wars* and when I returned to London that autumn excitement was mounting at the prospect of its arrival there. As in America the film was getting an amazing amount of attention from the media, but the difference was that in England no one, not even the critics, had seen it. The newsmen, not the publicists, were heralding its arrival, and in some other countries a similar situation was developing. When *Star Wars* did arrive it was to receive the kind of acclaim accorded only to true originals.

In show business, as in other fields, originality is rare and only the passage of time can put it into perspective. Three years after the debut of *Star Wars* we can think more objectively about the film's impact. I am old enough to be able to gain insight by recalling the stage musical *Oklahoma!* This show began life thirty-five years ago, and historians of show business now recognize that this folksy American entertainment,

which had no stars, was not just a great show but one that broke the many conventions stage musicals had previously adhered to. In its medium, *Oklahoma!* was a fundamental advance, a fact which no subsequent contender in the field could ignore except at its own risk.

And so it was with *Star Wars*. Something had come out of America that was quintessentially American, broke the conventions, and was destined to create its own legend.

In December 1977, at the Dominion Theatre, London, I was able to see for myself the exceptional degree of involvement with its audience that *Star Wars* evoked. It was also apparent that publicity's most potent agent, word of mouth, was spreading the film's fame more effectively than a whole army of publicists could ever hope to do. When I talked with the distributors (Twentieth Century-Fox), they told me that no film in living memory had launched itself with such meteoric thrust. Far from being concerned as to how to promote it, they had the unique problem of appeasing exhibitors outside London who, reflecting public interest, were demanding the right to show it concurrently with the capital. In response to this pressure, Fox put the film into general release earlier than had been planned. Such an impatient public clamor was unique in modern times. Indeed, for something comparable we must go back to the last century and consider the crowds that gathered at the docksides in Boston and New York to await the arrival from England of fresh installments of the *Pickwick Papers*. If the comparison seems at first abstruse, it should be remembered that England was then still the dominant culture and that Dickens was the supreme showman in the mass medium of his time.

In the autumn of 1978 I was engaged as unit publicist for *The Empire Strikes Back* which was to go into production the following year, by which time *Star Wars* itself would have earned some \$400 million at the box office and have become the most commercially successful picture in history.

What was the explanation of the phenomenal success of *Star Wars*? The answer still eluded me. I had marveled at the film's inventiveness, especially after seeing it a second time. What an incredible feat of magicianship, a "light-show," an audacious pantomime, but I really did not understand why so many Americans had come to regard the content of this movie as folklore worthy of near-religious zeal. Besides, I was concerned that even in the realms of "once upon a time," technology was taking over. Was a writer with a detached and ambivalent outlook the kind of publicist this new breed of filmmaker wanted? I had misgivings.

I was put at ease by producer Gary Kurtz's attitude, which seemed to imply that when you've got a success on the scale of *Star Wars* you can neither rest on your laurels nor proclaim to the world how clever you are. Information, not hyperbole, would be the order of the day. This was to be the basis of these filmmakers' public-relations stance and the beginning of an exciting quest for me. It led me through Norway to England and to California and imbued in me a respect for these risk takers with placid profiles, filmmakers who value the talent of the people they hire.

When I began I had never met George Lucas. I was not a science-fiction buff, and fantasy for me began and ended with *Alice in Wonderland*. It was as an innocent that I stepped into the *Empire Strikes Back* galaxy.

—Alan Arnold
January 1980

NORWAY

Saturday, March 3

Climbing to an altitude above the tree line, the Oslo-to-Bergen express train pressed through snow tunnels and labored up inclines whipped by a vicious wind. As we drew close to Finse the countryside became featureless and sullen until it was just undulating snow against a backdrop of mist. Throughout Europe, spring was overdue and we were going deeper into winter.

In the cars behind us parties of skiers were in festive moods, but a more subdued atmosphere pervaded ours. We had been traveling for six hours, the only occupants of a first-class carriage. Seated ahead of me were the Kurtzes, the Hamills, and Carrie Fisher with a young friend of hers whom she had known since their school days. I sat alone. With the exception of Gary Kurtz, I had known my companions only since starting out from London three days earlier.

Well, not exactly so, because I had met Carrie briefly and improbably in a field in Northamptonshire, England, one misty morning the previous October. We had gone there to support an equestrian event the *Star Wars* company was sponsoring for charity. Knowing her to be the daughter of show-business parents, I had expected a certain glamor, but if the small figure in tweedy clothes had not been pointed out to me I would never have recognized the actress I had seen play the strong-willed Rebel princess in *Star Wars*.

Slim as a stripling, her features agile and aware, she had a hint of melancholy about her as if celebrity were a cause for concern in someone who spurns a

Hollywood-style image and likes to mingle with the crowd. Celebrity, after all, came to her when she was barely out of her teens and she is only twenty-three now, although she looks somewhat older. She reminded me of stills I have seen of Mary Pickford taken at a time when that actress was older than the little-girl roles she played.

I had been told that the press constantly badgers Carrie by steering their interviews to the subject of her parents, but the private life of Debbie and Eddie did not interest me. What we actually talked about on that first brief meeting was cats because I was holding one, a little Siamese I had acquired from a stall on the outskirts of the field. Its dignified, unspoken plea to be cared for had moved me, but when I showed the animal to Carrie she backed away: She is allergic to the species. I saw no more of her until we boarded the plane for Oslo.

At London Airport I introduced myself to Mark Hamill whom I recognized in the departure lounge waiting for the flight. He looked less youthful and more sturdy than I remembered his being on screen in *Star Wars*, although there was something of the same all-American boyishness about him. But that callow sensitivity, the vulnerable look of someone on the first steps of life's experience, so appealing on first sight of Luke Skywalker, had gone; and this was not surprising, for three years had passed, years in which he had known both triumph and a near-fatal accident. Nevertheless, by any standards, Mark was a confident and good-looking young man, traveling now with his pretty wife who was many months pregnant. Marilou Hamill talked to me about her pregnancy and its attendant anxieties. Would there be adequate medical facilities on location? Her concern was understandable, for she had been whisked from the warmth of California to wintry England and now was bound for an even colder clime. She won me with her ingenuousness, and I thought she had pluck.

On the plane, naturally, our party divided into couples: Gary and Meredith, Mark and Marilou; even

Carrie had her friend, Charlie, with whom to pass the time. To console myself I drank some of the complimentary champagne.

On our arrival at Oslo, representatives of Twentieth Century-Fox met us and took us to the Scandinavia, the hotel where the next day Kurtz, Mark, and Carrie would appear before a press conference. But that evening we dined at a restaurant high above the city, where the food was as special as the view, but the conversation, I thought, was somewhat strained. I had no doubt I was to blame. I am cast against type as a publicist; I have no special talent for putting new acquaintances at ease, and I think that my presence may have inhibited the conversation of these friends of long standing.

At the press conference the next day Kurtz announced that principal photography would start the following Monday. He described *The Empire Strikes Back* as "a new chapter in the *Star Wars* saga," because the intention is never to refer to it as a sequel for the simple reason that future George Lucas stories do not have chronological sequence. In response to questioning, the producer revealed that *Star Wars* had so far earned \$400 million throughout the world, adding that the new picture would cost twice as much as the original to make, due partly to inflation.

When the conference opened up to more general questions, I was impressed with the way Mark handled those put to him. He was genial and amusing and there was no complacency, no conceit, when he said he had been contracted for three films in the saga, but that all depended on how the new one fared. I began to realize that this young actor, whom it would be all too easy to call just plain lucky, is a professional who knows how to handle himself. Carrie, too, was relaxed and candid and won over the press people with her lack of guile. She explained that she had come to Norway out of curiosity, not to take part in the filming because the scenes at Finse do not require her—she just could not bear to miss the location atmosphere. After a couple of days she would

be going on to Sweden before returning to London for the start of filming at the EMI-Elstree Studios. Carrie simply likes to travel.

After the press conference Fox executives took us on a tour of some of Oslo's sights. I know it is churlish to say that if you have seen one Viking ship you have seen, in a manner of speaking, a fleet, but I do not enjoy this kind of thing. However, I reminded myself that the tour had not been arranged for my benefit. Mark appeared to be finding the experience enthralling, although I detected a certain weariness in Carrie.

Dusk found us riding in sleighs drawn by little mountain ponies whose breath froze in the chill air as they trotted to the tinkle of bells. If not for my fairly lightweight clothing, I would have enjoyed the ride, but a full hour going round and round in figures of eight with the temperature falling fast left me horribly cold. But I suspected that for Mark and Marilou, perhaps for the others, too, a good memory was in the making. Anyway, I admit to being jaded; it's the price I pay for having so often over the years been to romantic places in company I didn't choose. My memories, secret and cherished, are of times when I have been able to slip away from movie folk and find the company of people to whom film business is an improbable dream. But this was not a fair reflection of my companions, who were the least pretentious film people I had ever met.

At five the next morning we assembled in the lobby, Mark sleepily protesting that the hotel had been unable even to provide coffee at that hour. Also, it seemed, no one had been available to bring down the Hamills' luggage, but eventually it joined the formidable pile already assembled in the lobby. Marilou seemed to have brought all that might be needed in the event of a premature delivery, including a bassinette, medical supplies, and an enormous teddy bear.

Soon a bus, as big as a Greyhound, appeared, and we climbed in and rode to the station through a city still in the grip of a crisp northern night. On arrival we

discovered there were no porters. Kurtz spotted a handcart which we piled high with our belongings, but there was too much for one load. The cart was awkward to push, its front wheels repeatedly jackknifing, putting it into reverse. Then we got to the wrong platform and had to turn about, getting to the Oslo-Bergen express with only five minutes to spare. After we unloaded the cart, Kurtz, Charlie, and I went back for more, as Mark boarded the train with Marilou, Meredith, and Carrie. I felt a bit annoyed, for I was by now feeling the strain, but told myself without total conviction that Mark was probably more concerned about his wife. Annoyance turned to alarm when, on our final approach, we saw the train begin to leave. Doubling our exertions we caught up with the train, hurled on our burdens, and leaped aboard ourselves. No film script, not even one by Jacques Tati, could have devised a more comical routine.

Hours later, with our journey nearly over, I was beginning to wonder who would unload our luggage that was still twelve cars away. But no one else appeared concerned. Carrie was reading a paperback biography of Spencer Tracy; Charlie was busy photographing the landscape through snowswept windows; and Marilou was resting on Mark's shoulder. Even the Kurtzes seemed not to have realized that we were fast approaching Finse. Had they forgotten about the luggage, or were they leaving its disposition to me?

For a moment I toyed with the idea of letting it all go to Bergen, but, concerned for my one suitcase and typewriter, I went in search of our belongings. Weaving a path through the laughing skiers, I finally reached the very end of the train where the abandoned pile still lay. How on earth would I get it all off at Finse?

There was another reason for concern—we were arriving in a blizzard. When the train drew into Finse the visibility was so low that I could not even see the platform. But when the train finally stopped I got to work at once, transferring each item from the carriage onto the snow below. The train began to move

again. I jumped, landing in snow so deep it might have buried me but for Marilou's teddy bear. The others had alighted from the front of the train, and so I stumbled through the blizzard in pursuit of them, finding the entrance to the ski lodge to be adjacent to the station. I had reached the base camp of the location.

It was Mark who greeted me. In fact, all smiles, he asked me where I had been! By the time I had thought up a suitable reply, he was absorbed in greeting various crew members he had last seen during the making of *Star Wars*. The unit was assembling. Our journey had begun.

FINSE, NORWAY

Sunday, March 4

Setting the scene for this complex location required a lot of intricate planning. Being our base, the Finse ski lodge is completely booked with some seventy technicians and cast members sharing its thirty-five rooms. A production office and camera room have been established here, and the base is serviced by a communications system that includes specially installed telephone lines, telex equipment, and radio links.

The personnel comprises key technicians from a first unit and the crew of a second unit. When the first unit returns to England, the second will remain to shoot more of the film's battle scenes. The locale for the battle is a glacier some four miles from the lodge, and this glacier is the prime reason why Finse was chosen as the location. Formed of stark blue ice and 6,000 feet high at its summit, the glacier affords

vistas suggestive of the frozen wastelands one would expect to encounter on a planet in its ice age. When the Germans occupied Norway during World War II, they considered the glacier so forbidding and so impregnable that they wanted to build a missile-launching pad on it. With typical ingenuity they set about filling in its crevasses with sawdust. They then began to construct a cable-car system from the Oslo-Bergen railway to the glacier's summit for transportation of supplies. The scheme came to nothing, but the foundations of the funicular still remain. What thwarted the plan, of course, was the weather, and it could defeat us, too, if it doesn't clear. The glacier isn't visible from the ski lodge today. It is enveloped by a dense white-out, a condition caused by snow whipped to powder by the wind.

Not far from the base a series of tents houses mechanics, special effects, construction, and props departments. A big hangar-tent accommodates the Lama helicopter, a small-bodied, very powerful chopper designed to fly through the hazardous down-drafts in the mountains.

There are two other vital installations: a base half-way up the glacier at 3,000 feet (named Camp Sharman after Bruce Sharman, the production supervisor) and another, Camp Kurtz, on the summit itself. Both of these bases comprise four huts that can be heated by means of their own generators. The encampments have been built along the lines of arctic survival camps and are equipped with toilets, medical supplies, and emergency food rations in lead-sealed packs the size of paperback books. In addition, all the snow-tracked vehicles being used to convey personnel across the snowscapes and up to the glacier also carry these emergency packs.

Why are such life-saving precautions necessary? The script calls for a setting representing a hostile, ice-bound planet; with Finse, the filmmakers have come as close to finding such a setting as the logistics of sustaining a big-scale film operation permit. Finse and its environs have one of the most treacherous winter

climates in Europe. Sudden gale-force winds can whip the snow into a blinding powder which disorients one and is difficult to survive in for any length of time. These much feared white-outs, such as we are experiencing today, cause a wind-chill factor that multiplies the sub-zero temperatures by three. This factor, familiar to all arctic experts, has to be taken very seriously indeed. No wonder Robert Scott chose this region to train for his expedition to the South Pole.

A medical team here will be constantly on the lookout for signs of frostbite among the crew, vigilant for the appearance of those white spots on exposed skin, the first symptoms. Strict warnings have been issued to everyone never to stray while out on location beyond paths marked by flagpoles (which are themselves buried and invisible today) because a false step into a deep snowdrift could spell death. Instructions on survival techniques in the event of a snow vehicle breaking down have been circulated, and on what to do should a white-out descend while we are working on the mountain. The unit has been equipped with protective clothing, but the risks remain of exposure to parts of the face and of snow numbing boot-clad feet during long hours outside. Of course, cross-country skiers come to Finse each year for ski treks and they withstand these conditions, but they are not called upon to operate intricate movie equipment while out in such extremes for up to nine hours a day.

So Finse will be no bed of roses. At breakfast this morning I sat with the Hamills and my friend George Whitear, the stills photographer, with whom I've worked on several arduous locations, including one on the Kenyan equator where we lived for weeks in huts infested with giant spiders that dropped on our beds in the night. Anyone who imagines that movie people live lotus-eating lives in glamorous hotels should think again. On location, the hours are long, the disciplines strict. Maintaining a film unit on location is immensely expensive and calls for complex logistical

expertise similar to that which backs up a military force on maneuvers. But under these circumstances, a camaraderie develops among crew and actors alike and barriers of status quickly disappear. "Watch it, Mark," I heard a young cockney carpenter say at breakfast this morning after Mark had quite nonchalantly helped himself to a second glass of orange juice, "or someone else will go short." In conditions you wouldn't choose to spend much time in, equality is the rule far more than at the studios.

Getting equipment here meant transporting ten containers by sea from Felixstowe, on England's east coast, to Oslo and then by train to Finse. Three more containers were flown in from London to Bergen. These consignments included two VistaVision cameras (one of them computer-controlled for special-effects work), two Panavision cameras, an Arriflex camera, wind machines, and props. Certain fragile make-up and special-effects items were hand-carried by crew members.

To move the crew, the actors, and the equipment to and from the locations, special vehicles were imported. These include ten Swedish-made Aktiv Snowtracs, each capable of carrying seven people and of towing sleds. From Switzerland came a very powerful vehicle called a Ratrac which has a snowplow up front. It towed the huts for Camp Kurtz up the glacier, but their timber foundations had to be flown to the summit by helicopter last November before the ice froze solid. In addition, there are four Aktiv snowmobiles—the motorbikes of the snowbelt—and twenty-four sleds.

The main aim of the first unit is to move day by day farther up the glacier to establish Luke Skywalker in the thick of battle. There are also scenes requiring Mark's presence in settings it would be difficult and less effective to simulate in the studios. But the second unit, staying on after Mark and the first unit leave, will use a double for Mark; the footage they shoot will be augmented later by miniature and other special-effects work in the labs of Industrial Light and Magic,

the Lucasfilm effects facility back in California. However, if the weather remains as bad as it is today, our schedule will be impossible to maintain. What we require for tomorrow's shooting is the kind of weather Finse should seasonably be providing—bright and clear, though very cold, possibly as much as twenty degrees below. Every department is getting ready for tomorrow's shoot despite weather reports from the nearby military base at Voss which forecast worsening conditions.

Robert Watts, associate producer, gave me some background on the choice of Finse for the location: "In clear weather the glacier provides the uninterrupted, treeless expanse we need for the Hoth scenes. However, a film location must also offer two other essentials: accommodation for the crew and a link with transportation to get people and equipment in and out. Otherwise, filming at the North Pole would be feasible. In terms of terrain, a place we saw in Sweden during our preliminary reconnaissances would have suited us. It was at the end of a railway line and could not be reached by any other means, but there were no accommodations in the area. We also saw a place in the north of Finland that provided an uninterrupted snowscape, but it had none of the stark grandeur of the glacier here at Finse."

Early in 1978 Robert Watts and consultant John Barry showed photographs they had taken of the Finse terrain to George Lucas, Gary Kurtz, and Irvin Kershner, who was to be the new film's director. John Barry, who had received an Academy Award for his work as production designer on *Star Wars*, was in an equivocal position as he was expecting a chance to direct *Saturn 3*, a film based on an original story he had written. Until that project was set, however, Barry was helping prepare the new *Star Wars* film now titled *The Empire Strikes Back*.

Lucas, Kershner, and Kurtz liked the look of Finse from the photographs and felt it had the qualities required for the ice-planet scenes. In May 1978 Gary Kurtz went to Norway to look at the place, accom-

panied by Robert Watts and Norman Reynolds, who as art director on *Star Wars* had also garnered an Oscar. Reynolds was by now production designer for the new picture because *Saturn 3* had obtained its financing and John Barry had decided to make his directorial debut. Kurtz and Reynolds saw Finse as Watts and Barry had seen it: snow still on the ground and the glacier an infinity of bleak, blue ice—forbidding, but absolutely right as the setting for the planet of Hoth.

So the decision for Finse was made and arrangements put in motion for beginning principal photography in the spring of 1979. Through the summer of 1978 the *Star Wars* team met with Norwegian government, shipping, railway, and banking representatives. During that time, Finse transformed itself from a snowy wilderness into a balmy place of flowers with a shimmering, crystal-clear lake. This lake, between the glacier and the ski lodge, was no longer frozen and had become, as it seasonally does, a haven for fishermen and lovers of wildlife, evoking nothing of the savagery required for Hoth. For this reason Irvin Kershner, who arrived in London in September, did not go at once to Finse. He went in November by which time the lake had partially frozen over again. Even so, Kershner was flown to the top of the glacier by helicopter just in case the ice was not yet firm enough to support a vehicle. The air temperature on that day was around twenty degrees below.

A Bell UH-1B helicopter from Voss took the lean, tall, fifty-six-year-old director to the summit and left him there. He wanted to meditate on the vista, he told the pilot, in order to take in its full dramatic quality, the grandeur of the blue ice, the infinitude of space. And so the chopper flew back to base.

After appreciating the panorama, Kershner—who, incidentally, is “Kersh” to his friends—began to feel a trifle cold. Deciding it was no place to linger further he radioed for the chopper to return, only to be told that the craft was having engine trouble and could not take off.

The film director, 6,000 feet up on the slippery slope with night descending, gritted his teeth and summoned all his inner strength. Determined not to panic, he braved the treacherous four miles back to base, moving down the side of the glacier and around the frozen lake in clothing more suited to a winter stroll in London's Hyde Park.

In January 1979 location manager Phil Kohler was assigned to prepare the Finse base camp and the two camps to be put on the glacial mountain. Also in January, the production team went out again and saw the location in its most hostile mood. No longer was the glacier simply beautiful; it was a starkly treacherous terrain. They returned to London fully confident that the Finse location had all the qualities George Lucas meant the ice planet of Hoth to have. But no one then knew we were in for what was to prove one of the worst winters in living memory.

Today a reconnaissance force has reached Camp Kurtz with difficulty. It has radioed back from the summit that the camp is buried deep in snow. Conditions are such, the message added, that it is impossible to begin digging it out.

FINSE, NORWAY

Monday, March 5

It is still snowing hard. Drifts that built up overnight are getting higher every hour, giving us views from the ski lodge of nothing more than walls of impacted snow. There is a feeling of siege about the place.

All day the snowplows have tried to forge a path from the railway, but the blizzard has defeated them.

Anyway, no trains have reached Finse for two days. They are being turned back to Oslo or to Bergen at stations along the line, unable to reach this halfway point because the snow tunnels leading to our plateau have collapsed. We are isolated in a wilderness of snow.

Nevertheless, the crew has been out trying to shoot in these terrible conditions. Muffled in arctic clothing, eyes stinging from the wind-whipped snow, they have been working on a set-up which shows Luke Skywalker, wounded and unconscious, face-down in the snow. These scenes require first the stand-in and then Mark himself to spend long periods in temperatures akin to a deep-freeze. I saw Kersh pawing with gloved hands at his freezing Lenin-style beard while talking intently to the producer. Both are tall men and as they leaned toward one another shouting into the wind, they resembled explorers on some arctic expedition. Around them the stumbling forms of technicians, anonymous in their protective gear, moved in and out of the whiteness, looking curiously unreal.

In the evening I returned to the lodge on a snow vehicle with Kersh. I shouted above the noisy motor that I wanted to tape an interview with him. He smiled and agreed, confirmation that no matter where we are, in no matter what conditions, movie people like to talk about themselves.

I wanted to learn from Kersh what considerations had impelled him to leave the sunshine of California for this hostile winterland to direct a space fantasy. He is a director whose movies have been realistic ones, strongly influenced by his early documentary background. Was it an irresistible financial offer, a bid for mass popularity, a fascination with success, or a fundamental interest in fantasy that had drawn him into the *Star Wars* orbit?

In the hotel we shed our protective clothing, layer upon layer of it, until we sat at ease, two comfort-loving men from more temperate climes, and began to talk.

Irvin Kershner: I first saw *Star Wars* with my son, who was ten at the time, and I saw the picture partly through his eyes. Watching his reactions and talking to him about it later, it quickly became obvious that a very satisfying thing about the film was knowing who was good and who was bad. The morality within the film had clear definition and since the good tended to triumph, that was highly satisfying—at least to my kid. I think people today have become confused by a general lack of definition. Everything is in the process of change. Then, suddenly, you see an entertainment where the order of things is clear: this is right, this is wrong; this is good, this is bad; this is effective, this is not effective, and so on.

Alan Arnold: But surely that is an adult's interpretation. I suggest your son would not have thought so deeply about it.

IK: True, his enjoyment was spontaneous. But the film appeals to the subconscious in all of us. People are interested in Zen, in the power that is in everyone. That's a step toward assuming responsibility for oneself and one's environment which is what the heroes in *Star Wars* seem to be doing. They are saying, "There is evil out there." But the evil people in the picture are really not that much different from the good people. They're using the same power, the Force, but they're using it for evil. And it's true that you can use your power for good or for evil. My kid certainly understood that even though he was only ten years old.

AA: Do you feel the *Star Wars* pictures are essentially an American concept?

IK: They fit into the category of being an American type, I think. An American film has a certain rhythm, an American rhythm. Everyone knows how fast American life can be. We have no time to waste. Time is money. Unfortunately, in the technological and commercial world, time *has* become money. The rhythm of America is fast; we communicate fast, and our films move at a fast pace.

In terms of the *Star Wars* films, we are spending more time [in *The Empire Strikes Back*] developing relationships between the characters, but the picture will still move very quickly.

AA: Do you believe a fast pace is an essential element in the *Star Wars* pictures?

IK: Yes, it's like telling a story breathlessly. There's so much to tell. There's so much about to happen and you want to get to it. We are dealing with kings and queens, people of immense power. In our own time there have been people who tried to conquer the world. They sacrificed humans by the millions. We see this kind of ruthlessness going on in our film. We see the soldiers of the Emperor, faceless men who are not interested in concepts of freedom. Yet freedom is an urgency in today's world. In their way, the *Star Wars* pictures are all about that urgency.

AA: And what about the conflict between good and evil in the films?

IK: Well, for example, Princess Leia's Rebel forces will *not* do anything in order to win. They will *not* sacrifice lives. They do not descend to the level of the enemy. That's the difference between the Rebels and the Empire. It's possible to fight because you love, not just because you hate.

AA: You are an international director based in Hollywood. Is it essential to you to maintain roots in America?

IK: It always has been. I've had the chance to move to Europe, but I was born in America, received all my training in America, and my family is there. I have studied the American culture, consciously and unconsciously, and I think I reflect American attitudes, good as well as bad. Americans have a certain unawareness of what other societies are about. We tend to be insulated. We're large and to a great extent self-sufficient. That produces a peculiarly American point of view.

AA: Yet Americans have a talent for friendship.

IK: You can afford to be friendly if you're not

afraid. Travel to France and you find a far less friendly attitude to strangers. You can live in Italy for years and find you still don't get invited home by a single family. This couldn't happen in America.

AA: Were you raised in a city?

IK: Yes. I was born and raised right in the middle of Philadelphia. In high school I played the violin and the viola. I studied composition and thought I'd be a great composer until I began listening to Prokofiev and Stravinsky. When I knew I wasn't going to be *that* great a composer, I began to be interested in the visual arts. But before I could begin any major studies, America was at war and, at eighteen, I found myself in the armed services in England. I was stationed there for two-and-a-half years.

AA: Did that help or hinder your development?

IK: I began to read a great deal of philosophy and aesthetics, and when I returned to the U.S. I studied painting and sculpture. I studied with painters like Hans Hofmann, and I began to see myself as a great painter, an expressionist. But, a few years later, I decided it was too lonely a vocation; the rhythm was wrong for me. I turned to photography. I believe that temperament determines everything. Rhythm is an extension of temperament.

AA: So you found your rhythm in photography?

IK: At first. Then I went to the University of Southern California and studied anthropology and history. While at USC, I discovered movies and did some work in documentaries. I worked in the Middle East for the World Health Organization, for Syracuse University, for the University of Southern California, and for the U.S. Information Agency. Then I returned to the States to direct one of the first TV documentary series: "Confidential File." I wrote, directed, and shot the programs, which was great training and led to my first feature [*Stakeout on Dope Street*], a picture about drug addiction. I followed this with a movie about capital punishment and prisons [*The Hoodlum Priest*].

AA: You were already a socially conscious filmmaker?

IK: Yes, I felt then that film was the most potent and benevolent propaganda form possible, but now I feel that it is a very poor form of propaganda. Propaganda is not film's function at all. Television and film create mass attitudes, and their values are often socially insidious.

AA: What about values and the *Star Wars* films?

IK: These films are morality plays. They have many of the elements of the medieval morality play. They are also fairy tales and have the qualities of a fairy tale. A morality play is at its best when it has mystery, when it's not clearcut or simplistic. There must be elements of ambiguity. I think the characters emerge more fully in this picture than in the first one. In the first movie the situations were so powerful you didn't really have time to watch the characters. They were totally in the service of the story. In the new film the characters will still be in the service of the story because the narrative must flow, but they will be more defined. They have rivalries, jealousies, sexual tensions.

AA: Will the kids understand these tensions?

IK: Children certainly understand sexual tensions. When my boy was nine he was talking about girls in school. At ten he was on the phone to them. They understand sexual tensions. That's a part of life from an early age.

AA: Why did you undertake a fantasy film when your background is in the more naturalistic type of film?

IK: Because I've been changing my attitude toward drama, toward art in general. At one time I felt that the naturalistic convention was the highest form of film art. I now feel that it is merely one of the forms of art. I love the challenge of fantasy. I remember reading an interview Aldous Huxley gave in a film journal in 1950. He was asked what he saw as the direction film would take in years to come. And he replied, "I certainly think it will

move through naturalism into pure fantasy. . . . Film is the only medium that can make the unbelievable believable." That's true. When you actually *see* something, you believe it more easily than if you merely read about it. When you both see *and* hear, the most outlandish, far-out thing becomes perfectly believable. In fantasy there is no limit to where you can be, what you can show, how fast you can move, the extent to which you can compress time. Drama *is* compression. Art is compression. Of course, there are disciplines involved. There is no absolute freedom in anything you want to do, particularly in the film business.

FINSE, NORWAY

Tuesday, March 6

Last night I telexed the following news dispatch to the wire services for immediate release worldwide:

Avalanches have isolated in a remote mountain pass at Finse, Norway, the film unit which traveled here last weekend to shoot the first scenes for the movie that continues the *Star Wars* saga—*The Empire Strikes Back*. The British and Norwegian film crew and the director, producer, and several actors are virtually cut off in a snowbound ski lodge 5,000 feet above sea level.

Several days of blizzards of unprecedented severity have blocked the railway links with Oslo to the east and the port of Bergen to the west. And there is no other way to reach this isolated location. The filmmakers were looking for a terrain which

had to be both hostile and alien for scenes set on an ice planet—and they have found exactly that setting.

For most of the year Finse has less than eighty inhabitants, most of whom are railway workers and snow-clearance specialists. There is no other reason to be here. Because Finse is almost exactly midway between Oslo and Bergen, snow-clearing equipment leaves from here to clear the blocked passes and bring relief to isolated communities, but this year even the snowplows are having difficulty getting through.

Mark Hamill and actress Carrie Fisher flew from London to Oslo on Thursday to attend a press conference announcing the start of the picture. They then took a train which reached Finse but could proceed no farther. Ten avalanches have made the snow tunnels impenetrable in places.

For the past several months the film company has sent all manner of equipment to this tiny place, including special tracked vehicles from Sweden that are capable of getting technicians and actors from the ski lodge to the mountaintop glacier. They have also imported strange "life forms" representing creatures from other planets and specially made large-format cameras with computer controls to film the elaborate special effects and hostile snowscapes. But now the blizzards have come, and the film community is virtually sealed in by its icy environment.

With the weather as it is, we cannot move much beyond the immediate environs of the ski lodge. So we have been shooting—in the banked-up snow behind the lodge—scenes of Luke Skywalker on an ill-fated reconnaissance mission across the plain of Hoth.

In the story Luke, while exploring, is attacked by a creature that inhabits the icy planet. He is badly hurt, but escapes the beast. After struggling through a blizzard, he falls exhausted in a snowdrift where the unrelenting storm proceeds to bury him. By the time

Han Solo finds him, Luke is unconscious. The parts of this sequence requiring Harrison Ford as Solo were to have been filmed at the studios, but because we cannot progress toward the glacier, producer Kurtz has decided to shoot more of it here. This means calling Harrison Ford to Finse—but how are we going to get him to this beleaguered base? No trains have reached us since Saturday. Avalanches still block the railway line and conditions are far too bad for helicopters.

I talked to Gary Kurtz on tape today. He has been constantly behind the camera with Kersh, problem-solving. For Kurtz is a fount of knowledge about special effects and has the experience of *Star Wars* behind him, while Kersh is new to pictures in which special effects play so predominant a part. Kurtz, like Lucas, understands the connection between what is to be filmed in live action and the elements to be blended in by the miniatures and opticals work in California. But George Lucas is not with us in Norway, and Kersh is more absorbed by what he sees through the lens, by the actors, by the live filming; so it is Kurtz who in Norway must keep the broad overview, for practically every scene we shoot here and will shoot at Elstree will be added to by the special-effects team in California. That is what makes the production of pictures of this kind so different from the more conventional ones.

Still in his thirties, a product of the University of Southern California film department, Kurtz was born and raised in California, but looks more like a New Englander with his Quaker-style beard. He is, in fact, a Quaker and a vegetarian. Kurtz met Lucas when the latter was filming his first feature, *THX-1138*, and later coproduced (with Francis Ford Coppola) Lucas's *American Graffiti*, the success of which enabled Lucas to make *Star Wars*.

Alan Arnold: I heard you say at the press conference in Oslo that this picture is going to cost more than *Star Wars*. Why?

Gary Kurtz: All over the world inflation has brought up the costs of every enterprise. Raw materials cost more and labor costs have risen in the three years since *Star Wars*. If, as a result of currency exchange variations, the pound gets harder in relation to the American dollar, we can expect an additional rise, but during the production of *Star Wars* the opposite situation occurred. The pound got weaker in relation to the dollar, so we benefited on paper to the extent of something like \$500,000. Today, the exchange factor will weigh against us. Quite apart from that, the present picture is conceived on a broader scale, not merely in terms of bigness but in terms of the action and development it covers.

AA: Are you having to pay more for the services of your three principal actors?

GK: Well, yes, both because they are considerably better known now, and because they are worth it. Some of the supporting actors are being paid more this time; and the key technical people are being paid more, too.

AA: Of your three American principals—Mark, Harrison, and Carrie—is one more expensive than another?

GK: No, each has the same deal, but because they will work different lengths of time as well as different overtime, the final amount each will earn will be different. But the basic rate is the same for each of them.

AA: Star status is something George Lucas doesn't encourage, I believe.

GK: Put it this way, pictures of the genre of *Star Wars* and *Empire* are very complex, very difficult to make technically. Therefore, they are essentially team efforts. But I would never say that actors, leading actors and supporting actors, are secondary. They are a vital element in the show an audience comes to see. But today, status is relative to many other things—and there are few performers today who could single-handedly carry a picture. Therefore, performance values tend to center around a

combination of actors rather than a single personality in a particular film. That is certainly true of our picture. And, of course, directors have their followings, too. It is very much a director's medium at the present time.

AA: What led you to select Irvin Kershner to direct *The Empire Strikes Back*?

GK: The problem you encounter when doing a follow-up to a very successful picture is that there are directors who shy away from the project for fear of being overshadowed by the reputation of the first film. George Lucas and I interviewed several directors, and one said: "I don't feel it would be good for my career now to do something that is in a sense a successor to someone else's work." But neither George nor I saw *Empire* as that kind of project. In terms of a saga of interrelated stories we always wanted to have each picture directed by a different person, to add a slightly different style or focus to the overall development, so that when they were eventually seen in a group one could see how the individual filmic styles added to the development of the characters.

In almost all of his pictures, Irvin Kershner has concentrated on his characters. His work shows humor and a fine sense of timing that is devoted to developing human relationships. We hoped to find someone who not only had the right attitude toward fantasy, but who would also develop the characters without losing sight of the inherent humor or slowing down the action of what essentially is an adventure story. Also, Kersh isn't cynical. Some of the younger directors working in Hollywood today are very good and very clever, but they also tend to be a little cynical about their material. The worst thing that could have happened would have been to engage a director who didn't believe in the material. That attitude shows through on the screen and was a principal reason why we thought Kersh was right. He has great enthusiasm, and I believe it will come through in the picture.

AA: Are you worried about the conditions we're experiencing in Norway?

GK: As you know, a great deal of planning went into this location. We'll all be disappointed if we don't get the ultimate in screen impact from it. But I think we shall, especially with our second unit backup because they will be spending more time here after the technicians from the first unit return to Elstree. Essentially, we came here for the ice planet, the battle long shots.

AA: But what if the glacier remains invisible and the crew can't get up to the summit?

GK: I think it is wrong to think that way. I know that if you look outside today you'll see an environment that couldn't be more inhospitable. The planet of Hoth is like that. We'll get our shots one way or another.

AA: Why hasn't George Lucas come to Norway?

GK: He's writing and I don't think he could write where we are. Also, he's engrossed with the special-effects material being prepared in California. And he doesn't like cold climates!

AA: Although it relied on California-based special-effects work, most of *Star Wars* was made in Britain on actual studio soundstages. Does Britain's economy benefit from the *Star Wars* success?

GK: I gave an interview on British television when *Star Wars* opened and I perceived some hostility on this point. Some people felt we had come to England and used its resources and had then taken all the money away. This isn't true. In the case of *Star Wars*, over \$5 million was spent in Britain for materials and labor alone which is more than the film's profit in England. On *Empire* the amount we'll spend will be something close to \$15 million. A lot of profit comes back to England through the distributor. How the distributor chooses to use the film in its various territories we cannot control. When Twentieth Century-Fox makes more pictures in England, that's a reinvestment.

FINSE, NORWAY

Wednesday, March 7

By telex to the news agencies:

American actor Harrison Ford has reached the snow-stricken pass at Finse, Norway, to start work in *The Empire Strikes Back* in a manner to justify the claim that the show must go on.

He arrived in the engine compartment of a snow-clearance vehicle, the only thing that could move along the Oslo-Bergen single-track railroad which avalanches and collapsed snow tunnels have blocked.

Ford had flown from London to Oslo to catch the train which travels a circuitous route across some of the most hostile winter terrain in Europe. At Geilo, a sizable ski resort thirty miles east of his destination, the train was stopped in blizzard conditions.

The railroad had decided to return its train to Oslo. But the filmmakers needed Ford for scenes in the morning. So they radioed the train to unload the actor who then, by two improbable taxi rides, reached Ustaoset, just twenty-three miles from Finse. That was where the snowplow found him, to bring him along the track between fifty-foot-high snowdrifts to Finse, which he reached at midnight.

When I saw Harrison after breakfast he was already in costume as Han Solo, waiting to be called for a rehearsal in the snow. He looked a bit dazed and

bleary-eyed. He had gotten very little sleep, but when I introduced myself he could not have been more courteous. I told him I wanted to talk on tape with him but that, in view of the rigors of his journey, this could surely wait. To my surprise, he said he would talk there and then. His manner reminded me of something I had not encountered since dealing with actors from the past, romantic stars like Cary Grant, in particular, who were trained in the old studio-style attitude to publicity. I have seldom seen it in the younger generation of actors who tend to be self-conscious about publicity, probably because a fair number of them are inarticulate. Yet here was Harrison—urbane, self-assured, and charming after having been up half the night. What a pleasant change!

Alan Arnold: Since *Star Wars* you have made three features with star billing. Were you trying to diversify the image the space fantasy gave you?

Harrison Ford: I saw the success of the film as an opportunity to diversify and to get work I would not otherwise have had a chance at. Sure enough, that is the way it worked. When you're part of a huge success, the offers come flooding in and I chose to cover as many bases as possible, to do as many different kinds of things as I could. But basically, I wanted to get known first and foremost as an *actor*, not as that actor who played Han Solo in *Star Wars*. Identification solely with *Star Wars* could have been the beginning and the end—with no middle—to my career. My sole ambition has always been to make a living as an actor, so I wanted to do all I could to ensure that.

AA: So, with the considerable celebrity *Star Wars* gave you, what did you do?

HF: I went from *Star Wars* to a picture called *Heroes* with Henry Winkler and Sally Field, and directed by Jeremy Kagan. I played a Vietnam veteran living in his old hometown, a farming community in Missouri.

AA: Was it a part you believed in?

HF: Yes, but it didn't tell the whole truth. The only

kind of belief I can have is in something that's well rounded, and this was not that kind of role. But I had a chance to create a completely different image from Han Solo. I knew that *Heroes* would be very quickly released and would show me in something totally different and thus give some proof of my versatility.

AA: After *Heroes* what did you do?

HF: I did a cameo role in Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*, playing a colonel in army intelligence, a quirky kind of character. Because the character had no name in the script I called myself Colonel Lucas—a little "in" humor.

AA: Then what?

HF: I did *Force 10 from Navarone*—for the wrong reasons. I enjoyed the company of Robert Shaw, Edward Fox, and the others, and I'm glad I had the chance to work with Bob Shaw. The film gave me billing above the title second only to Shaw. It also upped my price. That is important because in order to be considered for certain parts in Hollywood you have to have a certain price tag attached to your name. If you're in the high-priced category you've got a head start.

AA: There are actors who are not discriminating as long as they work, as long as the price is right and the billing is there.

HF: There was more to it than that for me. I did have doubts as to whether *Force 10* would work. I was promised a rewrite on it, promised a lot of things which didn't come through. The reason I did it was because I like to work and it seemed another opportunity to put into perspective the success of *Star Wars*.

AA: Then you did *Hanover Street*. Was that something you really wanted to do?

HF: It seemed an interesting project. It was a love story and the first time I'd kissed a girl on the screen. I felt that a love story was something I had to do to become an all-purpose movie actor. But it was *another* World War II picture. I play a bomber

pilot forced down behind enemy lines, and spend half the picture in Nazi uniform. Nevertheless, there was top star-billing with Christopher Plummer and Lesley-Anne Down. Yet, you know, the billing didn't bother me any more. Once I had achieved the billing with *Force 10* I could give that up as a plus factor.

AA: After *Hanover Street*?

HF: I did *The Frisco Kid* with Gene Wilder, directed by Robert Aldrich. I'm happier about that experience than the others I have mentioned. Working with Aldrich was marvelous. I play a kind of bank-robber-cowboy character, a rough guy in the Old West, a character that contrasted well with Gene Wilder's Polish rabbi. Together we make the journey from New York to San Francisco, so it's kind of a road picture.

AA: Tell me about your beginnings.

HF: I was born in Chicago in 1942. My father was an actor for a short time, a radio actor. I lived in Chicago until I went away to college in Wisconsin where I studied philosophy and English. In 1964 I went to Los Angeles to be an actor. Six months later I was being paid \$150 a week as a contract player for Columbia on a seven-year contract which folded after a year and a half. Then I was under contract to Universal for a year and a half. I did small parts in television and movies. After I left Universal I free-lanced but soon realized I wasn't going to be able to make it as an actor playing the kind of parts I was getting. I was being put into a niche, and if I didn't exercise discretion I'd be doing the same sort of thing the rest of my life. So I began *not* taking the parts that were offered and I became a carpenter, acting only when a good part for good money, something worthwhile, came along. I didn't work very much at all for four or five years, except as a carpenter, but I did play in *American Graffiti* and in Coppola's *The Conversation*. These films helped me build a reputation with

the people I care about. I felt I was still in training, still paying my dues.

AA: You were building up credit with the young directors.

HF: And with the young audiences. The parts were very diverse—from a sort of shit-kicker-cowboy-truck-driver type in *American Graffiti* to the vaguely homosexual San Francisco executive in *The Conversation*. There could be no connection in the mind of the audience. I was fulfilling myself as an actor.

AA: From what you've said so far one gets the impression of a highly professional outlook. Also of someone who is not easily satisfied.

HF: I would always like to be thought of as professional. That's a matter of showing up on time and knowing how to do your work. But, in one sense, it has very little to do with art. I think it must embrace the area of craftsmanship.

AA: To have established the character of Han Solo must have given you some satisfaction.

HF: It is very hard for me to look objectively at the film. It's George's creation. He gave himself a beautiful princess in Leia and a callow youth in Luke. He gave himself a sage warrior in Ben Kenobi and he gave himself a character called Han Solo, who is described as "a cynical space pirate." But he's not really a cynic and the phrase "space pirate" doesn't really indicate what he does. In fact, what he does in the story is to function as a kind of synthesizer. He's the most realistic character and consequently, in a way, the easiest one to play. It is a pleasure to play that kind of part. When I read the script I knew nothing about science fiction. I read the script and asked myself "can they really make a movie out of this?" I had no idea how it would feel creating Han. What I did understand was the relation among the four characters I have mentioned. I understood, too, what George had so cleverly done with the robots and other non-human creatures. He'd given them human potential.

So, from an audience's point of view, my job was to help tell the story. Han helps make everything contemporary, recognizably human, in a way. Anyway, it worked for a lot of people. I was just part of the equation George dreamed up.

AA: Was Han Solo a cardboard character to which you gave flesh and blood?

HF: He's not a cardboard character for me at all. He's as real as anything else. I never thought of the character as having only two dimensions until the critics said so. And they're wrong. The third dimension is me. It's part of me. I intentionally keep my interpretation simple. As an acting job I don't find it any less or more difficult than any other. In so many movie ventures the moviemakers put their egos between an actor and his ideas. That doesn't happen here. The motives of the people involved in the *Star Wars* pictures are straightforward. There is no pretension. I enjoy working for them. I've had the opportunity of doing other things in-between and so it's not the only stamp in my passport. But I can't conceive of any negative aspect of playing a role like Han Solo.

FINSE, NORWAY

Thursday, March 8

Mark Hamill came to talk on tape today.

In the winter of 1976, after returning from the filming of *Star Wars* in England, Mark Hamill nearly lost his life in an automobile accident. His car skidded on a California freeway, turned over several times, and came to rest on an embankment. He was carrying no

identification and his face was so badly injured that no one could recognize him. Hours later, Gary Kurtz found him in a hospital. It took Mark months to recover, but the experience changed his way of life and a year later he married a twenty-year-old, blue-eyed dental hygienist from Los Angeles. They are expecting their first child in June.

Alan Arnold: People tend to feel about actors who have become successful quickly that it's all luck, but I know from talking to actors over the years that a lot of hard work and disappointment invariably precedes the lucky break. It's true in your case, isn't it?

Mark Hamill: Yes, it's certainly true. I started doing plays when I was thirteen, and I was hooked right away, intensely interested in all aspects of production, not just acting. I was trained in the repertory tradition that insists that a two-line part is as important as the lead. And every chance to get in front of an audience was experience, so I grabbed at everything that came my way. After I started acting professionally, I had some 100 or more television credits before doing *Star Wars*. And before my television work there were years of doing plays, everything from Shakespearian roles to Neil Simon comedies. What made people think it was instant success was that I came in contact with a vehicle that brought me into the limelight seemingly overnight. So most people thought *Star Wars* was my first job. Even had it been I would have needed the technique to back it up. I'm a professional, but it doesn't bother me that the public thinks I'm lucky, that I was discovered overnight. In a sense, George Lucas *did* find me. I don't think he was very familiar with my work. He was interested solely in casting the right people for his characters. I don't think he knew I had those credits and probably wasn't all that interested. But the work those credits represent prepared me for the big chance, so that when it came to auditioning for George I was able to do well.

AA: What qualities was he looking for?

MH: In my case, sincerity, a desire for adventure, a naive quality. Luke is the classic example of a character who is yearning for the adventure that lies beyond the horizon. Like Jim Hawkins in *Treasure Island* he has an honest, fresh outlook toward the incredible. As a foreign boy on distant planets he gets involved in adventures that take him to all parts of the galaxy. But Luke remains in control of himself, and I hope I have managed to do the same following the success of *Star Wars*. Luke isn't amazed by robots and spaceships; they are part of his world. I'm not incredulous at all about what has happened to me. I'm just incredibly pleased.

AA: Luke is an original innocent, isn't he?

MH: Exactly, but he's also a reflector for all those bizarre characters who surround him. Think of Chewbacca, for example, a doggy-type character who nevertheless has the mathematical capability to operate a spaceship. Luke is a reflector for all those uniquely strange characters, the droids, robots, and animal forms. You need one character who relates to everyday life so that people can say, "I could be him," someone who doesn't scare or astound you. I think Luke is that character and that any one of the young people watching the picture can say, "I'm Luke."

AA: Having gone through all those adventures in *Star Wars*, is *The Empire Strikes Back* going to make Luke less innocent?

MH: Luke will be tempted by what he has to undergo. It was made clear in *Star Wars* that the dark side of the Force is very seductive, that it is easier to achieve your goals by allowing anger and aggression to guide you, which is what has happened to Darth Vader. As the saga continues there will be constant changes in all the characters. Luke certainly isn't the same boy now as he was in the first film; I think that will keep him interesting. I'm not the same Mark Hamill and I hope that makes *me* more interesting.

AA: To be the center of so many young people's

hopes and dreams you must need to maintain a life-style that can be seen as a good one. For someone of your age is this a strain?

MH: As I say, I've tried to keep a cool head. I think there are parallels between what has happened to me and what has happened to Luke. *Star Wars* and *The Empire Strikes Back* have swept me out of southern California to England, Africa, and Norway with all the velocity that Luke is swept into new adventures in new environments. Before *Star Wars* I had never been out of the United States—except for being in high school in Japan—but now every day opens up something new. It's wonderful to have been a part of the project from its inception. To have created a character and to come back after three years to develop it further is truly exciting.

AA: On your arrival here you greeted old friends as if they were family, crew members who were with you on *Star Wars* and are working with you again. It seems to me that you are the sort of person who needs a close relationship with the people around you.

MH: I adore the crews I work with and I know the importance of the work they do. For the carpenters, grips, gaffers, and other crew members there isn't the glamour that supposedly surrounds what I do, but they're the greatest. The company has tried to rehire most of the original team that worked on *Star Wars*, and it is great to see their familiar faces. It takes all these people to put a film together; they are pieces in an intricate, collaborative art. When I was working backstage in the theater—in lighting, set design, construction, props—I learned that it's the technical people who make an actor look good; you have to keep them on your side. So I suppose there's a practical side to my friendly nature, but it's sincere nonetheless. After *Star Wars* I worked on a film in Israel (*The Big Red One* directed by Sam Fuller) and some of the crew there openly admitted to me that during the first week they were apprehensive. Would I be temperamental, they were

wondering, difficult to work with as a result of the success of *Star Wars*? They were pleased to find I had remained basically the same. I'm proud of that. I hope someday to be able to participate in filmmaking in ways other than acting. I'll need a lot of good people around me because it is such a complex art. In moviemaking, we're all in it together—from the writer and the director down to the guy who hits nails on wood.

FINSE, NORWAY

Friday, March 9

There has been a slight improvement in the weather and some trains are reaching Finse again. One from Oslo this morning brought the first of a contingent of mountain-rescue skiers, not to rescue us but to take part as extras in the battle scenes. These young Norwegians will live here at the ski lodge occupying the rooms we vacate, and in return for their services the company is making a donation to the Norwegian Red Cross.

What Gary Kurtz has to decide is how long the first unit can wait here in the hope of getting to the summit of the glacier as we are scheduled to start filming at Elstree on Monday. The decision is all the more difficult to make because for a short while today we could see the summit gleaming majestically during a brief interlude of sunshine.

Indeed, the production office telexed Elstree with a hint of optimism: "Weather clearing and if it holds we are considering moving up to Camp Sharman." But the message had a dying fall: "The forecast is

not good and the huts on Camp Kurtz are still covered in snow."

Unfortunately, they were right to be cautious, for conditions only minimally improved and we were able to go only halfway to Camp Sharman where we filmed scenes of Luke Skywalker astride a Tauntaun. This is a new addition to the George Lucas bestiary, a species of mammal able to survive in the inhospitable climate of the ice planet. The Rebel fighters have learned to ride them in the way men on Earth ride horses. A picture of Mark riding a Tauntaun was released to the wire services in an effort to discourage the press from trying for secret photographs. But they are resourceful.

While covering some Anglo-Norwegian army exercises based at Voss, a photographer from the *London Sun* persuaded an army helicopter pilot to take him to the area of our location. During a brief letup in the weather the helicopter swooped through low clouds and landed close to the unit. The photographer took pictures and the chopper flew off. It was a dangerous and illegal maneuver. The only other press representative to reach us so far has been a little old lady on skis who had trudged several miles to find us. She represented a local newspaper, and we were so impressed with her enterprise that Kurtz talked to her at length and introduced her to the principals. Apart from that, our sole visitors are the intrepid women who arrive with sleds bearing canisters of greasy soup and messy meatball stew. They ladle this onto paper plates while we stand in line, but by the time the food is served it is nearly frozen. Even Kersh, I noticed, ate this unappealing mush, which is better than nothing after hours in the cold.

As there is little more that I can write about unless an ascent to the summit is made, I am taking the evening train out tonight. When the crew learned I was leaving they congratulated me. "His name has come up on the escape committee," said one, as if I were making a dash for it through the wire of a Siberian labor camp. The inference is not all that out-

landish for conditions here are punishing. One of the special-effects team has suffered frostbite and has been sent home for treatment. Many of us have less severe frostburn, particularly below the eyes. Men and equipment both are vulnerable in these extremes.

Nothing functions as it is supposed to at temperatures so low. Special-effects technician Allan Bryce told me that, "Plastic cables, for example, go stiff in extreme cold or snap when taut. They become as brittle as glass. So we've had to devise new types of cable for our explosive firings. Batteries lose their efficiency, too; their electrolyte freezes. That's a big problem for us. We get a lot of advice from NATO, some of whose personnel have had a lot of experience at forty degrees below."

So as evening came I caught the train to Bergen and arrived at midnight in thickly falling snow. The town did not strike me as a happy place. At that hour youths ranged the treacherous streets in belligerent frustration because all bars and restaurants were closed. Like other Scandinavian towns, Bergen battens down early to thwart the heavy drinking of people in these winter cities. Authorities never seem to learn that a curfew simply makes people drink more in a shorter time. At the hotel I could not even get a sandwich. It mattered little. At 6 A.M. I would be leaving for my flight to London. I had seen enough of northern snow.

LONDON

March 10-11

There is a hint of spring about London, false though it is. All Europe is still gripped by winter, and more snow is on the way to these islands. Nevertheless, the first crocuses are flowering in the city's parks and people have a restful look which comes with good weather. Even my Siamese cat is less inscrutable and finds circles of sunlight to wrap himself in, benignly wise as any mystic. So, despite a guilty feeling about leaving my colleagues in the snow, I'm glad to be home and to have this respite between Norway and the start of work at the Elstree Studios.

Elstree is a satellite of London, a sprawl of suburban housing around a shopping street, but this town has a firm place in movie ethnography. Its history stretches back to the silent days. Sir Alfred Hitchcock made his first films on its lots and stages, and, surrounded by unspoiled pastureland and leafy lanes, great stars such as Paul Robeson and Richard Tauber performed before the cameras. However euphemistically, through the 1920s and 1930s Elstree was England's little Hollywood, and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer believed in it sufficiently to build a mighty complex of nine soundstages there. I was born close by and in my childhood I would ramble star-struck in summer across the hay-stacked fields to get as close as I dared to the wire-fence enclosures to watch and listen. Once I was rewarded by a fleeting glimpse of Leslie Howard as the Scarlet Pimpernel. Little did I know that twenty years later I would be in the heart

of those studios working with stars like Marlene Dietrich and James Stewart.

Alas, Elstree's years, like those of Britain's film industry as a whole, have been subject to frequent economic traumas. In the early 1960s MGM shut down forever, but not before *2001: A Space Odyssey* had been made there. The old MGM lot is now a frozen-food warehouse. But somehow the EMI-Elstree Studio complex has survived to this day and can proudly proclaim itself "the home of *Star Wars*." The truth is that before the famous movie quartered there those studios, too, faced a bleak future.

Visiting Britain in 1975, Gary Kurtz had been shown every remaining film facility in Britain—except Elstree. He saw Pinewood, home of the Bond movies, and sprawling Shepperton, and studios at Twickenham and Bray, but he didn't see Elstree for the simple reason that it was closed. The last movie based there had been *Murder on the Orient Express* (1974), but now its stages were dark and the film-industry unions were contesting a plan to sell it off as real estate.

What the producers hoped to find was a nest of nine or ten sizable stages all available in one place. They had already looked into Hollywood's facilities but due to their use by television and to some closures, neither Fox, Sunset Gower (Columbia's old complex), Culver City (once the Selznick studios), nor Warner Bros. in Burbank could offer the space they needed in the particular time slot envisaged for *Star Wars*.

Gary Kurtz then investigated the situation in Italy, but finally decided on Britain because he felt it had advantages in terms of studio space availability, talent and labor pool, transport to North Africa (where *Star Wars* would go on location), and language because, of course, everybody in England speaks English of a sort.

Of the British studios, only Pinewood seemed to have enough going for it, including the massive "007" stage, built especially for the Bond films. But Pinewood has a system of internal staffing which lays a heavy overhead on an incoming independent producer.

So the trail eventually led to Elstree which Kurtz saw after the management there had decided to struggle on as a "wall-to-wall studio," an industry term for a studio that provides stage space but little else, leaving the independent to bring in his own specialists and create his own departments. This seemed a better deal for *Star Wars*, but Elstree lacked one basic essential: a stage as big as the "007" stage or Stage H, the huge, hangarlike, silent stage at Shepperton. Nevertheless, they settled for Elstree and built the set for the great hall scene, which ends *Star Wars*, on Shepperton's Stage H.

In the wake of the movie's success, George Lucas's dream of making a saga of interrelated space adventures became a reality and the decision to make *The Empire Strikes Back* was taken. At an early point in the planning a bold idea was conceived. Elstree would again be the base for live-action photography, but the company would build there what the studio lacked: a really big stage.

Foundation work on this stage was completed in 1978, just before winter locked Britain in a grip of ice; but even so, the length and severity of the winter of 1978-79 was to delay its completion. The measurements of the new stage are daunting. It is 250 feet long, 122 feet wide, and 45 feet high, adding up to an overall cubic capacity in excess of one-and-a-quarter million cubic feet. You could play a game of soccer in it. On each visit I made to the studios last year I saw the stage grow, and for me it symbolized the scale of the production I had become involved with and the vision of the new filmmakers with whom I had become associated.

More evidence of their approach was the building of a full-scale model of Han Solo's spaceship, the *Millennium Falcon*, using a firm of maritime engineers at Pembroke Docks in Wales, 260 miles southwest of London. Before dawn on a bitterly cold January morning I boarded a tiny Cherokee plane at the Elstree airfield to fly to Pembrokeshire to see the *Falcon* being constructed.

We stood shivering—Norman Reynolds, production designer, Bill Welch, construction manager, and I—on a thickly iced runway. The weather reports were not encouraging, but the pilot decided to fly, regardless. Soon we were pushing through snow flurries to 5,000 feet, flying in and out of air-pockets like a mandarin's kite, climbing higher to cross Mount Snowdon before descending along a westerly valley touched by the first thaws. I had never seen this farthest reach of the British mainland and was struck by its distances as if the land there has a desire for bigness the ocean disallows. It gave one a joyous sense of freedom after the crush of the city.

The *Falcon*, too, was a thing of beauty, a vast circular craft of steel, 65 feet in diameter, 16 feet high, with a mandible giving it an overall length of 80 feet. Its weight is 23 tons. It was being constructed in a hangar at Pembroke Docks where in the 1930s great flying boats were made, craft that spanned the passenger routes of Imperial Airways when Britain's Empire was still extant. The building of the *Falcon* had brought a taste of the space age to this remote community, and there was much gossip in the pubs as to what exactly was being built in the hangar on the shoreline.

The *Falcon* will be brought in sixteen interlocking sections by a convoy of trucks to London for re-assembly at the studios. By means of compressed air pads similar to those used on hovercraft, it will be floated into position on the new *Star Wars* stage.

Another visit I made was to a toy factory in Oxfordshire where a young designer who had built up a successful export business in rocking horses was being assisted by *Star Wars* special-effects and art-department specialists in building improved R2-D2 robot units for the new picture. No fewer than five versions of R2-D2 were being made, including one that can be submerged in water. Simultaneously, at Letchworth Heath, near London, Ogle Design Ltd., a company better known for its Reliant sports cars, was manufactur-

ing snowspeeders, highly mobile land-air attack craft that would make their debut in the battle scenes to be filmed in Norway.

Preparations for the filming, then, were proceeding in many areas, not least, of course, at the studios themselves where new departments for art, make-up, and special effects had been established.

Each time I went to the studios the scene was more impressive, and in the first weeks of 1979 I was able to write that despite Britain's general industrial gloom (strikes had shut down half the economy in what was being called "the winter of discontent") one enterprise was on schedule: preparations for the filming of *The Empire Strikes Back*.

Then came the night of the fire. Stanley Kubrick was filming *The Shining* on Stage 3 and, on the night of January 24, that stage burned down, gutted in a flash fire that may have been caused by an electrical short. The cluttered driveways of the studio complex prevented the local fire department from getting its trucks in, and by morning the stage was a smouldering ruin. *The Empire Strikes Back* had only been waiting for Kubrick to finish on Stage 3 before moving in to build. Its total loss meant a complete rescheduling almost on the eve of production, and because Kubrick had to revamp his set on another stage, virtually two soundstages were denied to the *Star Wars* team. Time-wise it is doubtful the picture will recover.

EMI STUDIOS, ELSTREE

Monday, March 12

The first unit has wrapped at Finse and is on its way home to begin shooting here tomorrow. Mark Hamill, however, has stayed in Norway because it is still hoped that the weather will improve sufficiently for the second unit to establish him on the glacier. Meanwhile, George Lucas has arrived in London, and when I saw him today he was treading snow. But it wasn't the kind that chills. It was artificial snow in the Rebel command center on Stage 1 which is now ready for filming. Incidentally, we had taken several crates of this simulated snow to Norway—just in case.

The command center is an ingeniously crafted set. The glistening effect on the stalactites and stalagmites along its corridors was achieved by using scrim and plaster sprayed with paint and lacquer. To make the corridors look as if they had been hewn out of the ice by laser beams, sheets of polystyrene were worked with hot wire-cutters. An effect of icing around the pipes and vents which conduct the command center's air supply was produced by treating them with cold kerosene which was sprayed with hot wax that solidified to give the effect of freshly forming ice. Not so many years ago you used either salt or soapflakes, but modern cameras show every defect and the artifice must be perfect.

I talked to Norman Reynolds about the new processes and he told me that film-set construction has been revolutionized in recent years by the use of new plastics and, in particular, fiberglass which is now

often used in place of wood. In Reynolds's art department there are three art directors, a set dresser and his assistants, five draftsmen, two illustrators, several scenic artists, four production buyers, modelers in clay, and people making fiberglass molds. His department overlaps with the construction department which has two managers and, counting the carpenters, riggers, and plasterers, a work force of some three hundred. Also, on a picture of this kind the art department is so closely allied with the wardrobe and make-up departments that their tasks at times are indivisible.

Alan Arnold: How can you possibly know what people in other galaxies might design for themselves?

Norman Reynolds: The simple answer is that we don't try. It would be fruitless. George Lucas gave us our terms of reference on *Star Wars* and we have abided by them. "Everything," he said, "must relate to Earth, to what we know about our own planet." This prevents us from getting carried away into realms of science fiction. The *Star Wars* pictures are not science fiction. We're making adventure stories for which the terms of reference are in the here and now. We're not trying to convey a world of scientific wonder. We're merely illustrating George's imaginative tales.

We try to create a strangeness from familiar things. We'll gather airplane parts, bits of machinery and such, and paint them different colors, turn them inside out or upside down to get the strangeness we require and yet retain a recognizable quality.

AA: Is actual space research of help to you?

NR: We keep abreast of NASA's work and all the new technology. British Aerospace, too, is advising us about some of our constructions. But we never forget our basic terms of reference, that everything relates to what we know. That is the springboard and it is essential to the telling of a *Star Wars* story. Although it is fantasy, you can feel at home in that distant galaxy.

AA: Will there be new weaponry in the picture?

NR: There will be some new weapons evolved for use in the extreme climate of the ice planet. They are based on actual weaponry and given various refinements to lend a feeling of strangeness. The latest in the lineup is the Rebel snowspeeder which flies close to the surface like an airborne tank. It is quite small with only a fourteen-foot wingspan. It's a two-man fighter with a pilot up front and a gunner facing out the back. But oddest of all, I suppose, are the Imperial snow walkers, machines that look like huge animals.

AA: So what about animals that look like machines?

NR: We'll get to them.

Tuesday, March 13

Kersh arrived at the studios at 7:30 A.M., relieved to be out of Norway. Like all of us, he has the shadowy marks of frostburn below his eyes. It has been a smooth transition from the location to the studios and we have already shot a number of scenes in the *Millennium Falcon's* hold. I talked to Kersh about Norway.

"Trying to look at a script, hold a pencil, and look through a lens were feats in themselves in that snow, battered by a blizzard, wearing so much clothing," he said. "You simply didn't think about yourself. One of the curses of any endeavor is self-consciousness. It gets in the way. We were all starting a new adventure, feeling each other out. My attitude is that humor is the best way to relax tensions. I had icicles in my beard, so I made jokes about it. Anyone who starts to complain sets off a chain reaction. We were all cold and working hard. I found Gary's presence good. He never walked away from the problems. I knew there was always someone else out there to back me up."

Kersh then joined Lucas, Kurtz, and other key personnel in a projection room to view the Norwegian

material. Due to the weather it had not been sent to Finse. After two hours they came out looking pleased, and as a bonus they received a telex from Finse reporting that the weather had improved enough that the second unit was able to establish Mark on the glacier.

I walked over to the make-up department to talk to make-up supervisor Stuart Freeborn, who can truly be described as one of the industry's veterans. He began his career in the 1930s with Alexander Korda, making up such performers as Conrad Veidt and Charles Laughton, actors who really knew what make-up was all about. Apart from supervising the make-up on pictures as distinguished as Carol Reed's *Oliver!* and David Lean's *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, Freeborn made up Peter Sellers in three disguises for *Dr. Strangelove*, Albert Finney as Hercule Poirot in *Murder on the Orient Express*, and was responsible for the apes in *2001: A Space Odyssey* and the ferocious dogs in *The Omen*. On top of all that he supervised the make-up for *Star Wars*.

What seems virtually a factory to produce the special make-up compounds for the new nonhuman and alien characters has been established here at Elstree. Due to the sensitivity and, in some cases, the toxicity of some of the substances being used, special plumbing, extractor fans, and thermostatic heating has been installed. But Freeborn is understandably reticent about the new processes being devised. "From the early days of movies this has been a craft of secret," he said, "and we're observing that tradition, but we can say that there will be some exciting new masks and faces in the upcoming picture."

Alan Arnold: Do you make the materials you use?
 Stuart Freeborn: We have our own techniques and create many of our own materials. We also use materials like synthetic fibers, synthetic furs, plastic skins, and foams. We have special color techniques. We make eyeballs and teeth and we implant hair. It's an ancient craft, you know, and we tend not to be talkative about it. The Germans really de-

veloped screen make-up. The early films from the UFA Studios in Berlin were brilliant, and Hollywood recruited many of their pioneers, the great mask-builders. Making masks is an important part of our work in the *Star Wars* pictures, especially masks for the new creatures introduced as the saga develops. So I have to know about the functions of feather and fur, the biological reasons why they are shaped as they are, how they work. We study anatomy and body structure. Living creatures are moving all the time. They never stay still. Muscles have to be discharged all the time an animal is moving. So there are technicalities when you put masks on faces, especially if you want to get a lot of animation in the mask.

AA: Did you make up Sir Alec Guinness as Obi-Wan Kenobi?

SF: We did very little make-up on him. He had a nice tan and his own beard. He looked pretty good as he was. His is a good face to work on, a marvelous face. In some actors the features seem to fight you. Sir Alec has a face that comes together immediately. He knows what you're doing and makes it work. Every true actor's face is plastic and a good actor is a good make-up artist himself.

AA: Do the three young American principals give you any problems from the make-up point of view?

SF: Not really. We just try to make them look a little different from the way they look naturally. We have to blend what the script dictates and the way their faces react to the processes of make-up. The result is their screen look. No screen actor looks precisely the same offscreen. It is part of the illusion, part of the show.

Wednesday, March 14

Revisions are being made to the script, not major changes but dialogue adjustments and a scene cut here and there. A new schedule is needed and there have been meetings between Kurtz and Robert Watts to rework the shooting plan. The live-action filming was originally scheduled for sixteen weeks, but nobody I talk to is confident that this is realistic. The actual filming will take considerably longer.

In Norway the weather has deteriorated again and the telexes from Finse reflect the mood of frustration that overtakes the technicians and production staff there when they are prevented from working. For the battle scenes on the glacier they want the clean light of snowless days, no matter how sub-zero, but the snows have come again.

I talked to Peter Suschitzky, director of photography, about the problems of the second unit.

Peter Suschitzky: I sympathize completely, but there is little they can do while it snows. I have filmed in zero temperatures before but not with the sort of equipment we were carrying on the Finse location, such as the VistaVision cameras which needed special conditioning.

Alan Arnold: Photography against snow backgrounds surely must lack color.

PS: Lack of color can sometimes be beautiful and interesting. Actually, I like the restricted tones of white backgrounds. In the ice corridors of the command center I am adding points of interest with lights to achieve color here and there in faces and costumes. There is never a lack of color, only a subtler use of it.

AA: Does the presence of a blue screen in a set create a problem for you?

PS: It is always more difficult because you have to perform a feat of imagination. You must imagine how something is going to look when finished. As you say, sometimes we are shooting on what is virtually a half-completed set and I find visualizing the results difficult at times. But before I started, I went to California and saw what they do at ILM, and although I don't pretend to be an expert in miniature photography, I understand their needs. As our material arrives, they will begin their work on the backgrounds we leave incomplete.

AA: What types of cameras are you using?

PS: The only unusual ones are the VistaVision cameras for the material to be shot against the blue screen on which other images will be superimposed. We use VistaVision cameras because they have a larger negative area, better definition, and more room to maneuver, but they are cumbersome, old-fashioned cameras which haven't really been used since the mid-1950s.

AA: I'm told that one was used on *Gone with the Wind*.

PS: That's possible because VistaVision cameras are adaptations of old Technicolor cameras which date back to the late 1930s. They were readapted in the early 1950s to become large-negative-format cameras as competition to the first Cinemascope films.

AA: Is a space fantasy more difficult to photograph than a conventional film?

PS: Only in the sense that so many special effects are used. I can make things look more fantastic or more like everyday. My guide is the script.

In fact, one is continuously being reminded that the film is being shot on three levels—here at Elstree, on location in Norway, and in the special-effects labs at ILM.

Robert Watts: "The constant need for communication places delicate responsibilities on department heads. When you are dealing with full-scale building in

the studios, shooting actors' doubles on location, and filming opticals and miniatures in a lab 6,000 miles away *simultaneously*, it's clearly imperative that everything matches in every detail. That is why Gary Kurtz's and George Lucas's trans-Atlantic view of what is happening is vital. Theirs is the view from the bridge."

Friday, March 16

It is thirty-three degrees below on the glacier according to the production-office report—and that's the *good* news because it isn't snowing and the light is good. So the second unit there is making progress again, and the telexes sound optimistic.

Meanwhile, here at the studios we're completing the scenes in the *Millennium Falcon*'s hold, in which Han is trying his best to flirt with a reluctant Leia. It's love in a cold climate because the space travelers are grounded in the *Falcon* on the frozen planet of Hoth. Carrie and Harrison were both on call at 7 A.M. for these scenes and it is well below zero in England, too.

Monday, March 19

The new set is the medical center inside the Rebel headquarters. Han has brought a very battered Luke in from the cold to undergo the marvels of robot medicine. For this sequence, Mark Hamill had to be totally immersed in a tank containing 400 gallons of chlorinated water and had to wear an aqualung which incorporated a light-emitting diode that pulsed green, red, and yellow.

The tank, 7'6" high and 3'8" in diameter and made of clear perspex, was the largest of its kind ever made.

British Aerospace, a company experienced in the manufacture of perspex cockpits for pressurized aircraft, cooperated in the design of the tank.

Time magazine's London correspondent, Eric Amfi-theatrof, talked with Gary Kurtz for an hour, but he wasn't taken to see the stage since the sets are closed to all the media. The movie isn't seeking publicity now and there is a serious risk of giving away original ideas by any uncontrolled use of stills or written material. Keeping wraps on motion pictures of this kind is as vital as, say, keeping tight security on space research, or on a new model of car, or on anything you don't want your competitors or the public to know about until you're ready. With television able to get a science-fiction product on the screen in much less time than it takes a movie to be filmed, edited, and ready for release, security is important. The film we are making introduces new life forms and original conceptions of other environments. Ideas like this are most certainly marketable abstracts. Originality is what this is all about.

Tuesday, March 20

There is so much expertise remote from the sets, quiet men working away from the clamor of the soundstages. One example is Ralph McQuarrie, who is to be found in a section of the art department. As design consultant and conceptual artist he made a very important contribution to *Star Wars* and is repeating that contribution for *The Empire Strikes Back*.

McQuarrie's sketches and paintings are central to both pictures; they were the first graphic depictions of key sequences in the Lucas scripts and as such were indispensable to departments that later developed them into actual sets, space hardware, costumes, and props.

McQuarrie is a Californian by adoption, for he was

born in the Midwest (Gary, Indiana). He is fifty now and recalls a childhood during which his family was uprooted by the search for a livelihood, moving first to Montana, to the West Coast, and then to Vancouver, Canada, where McQuarrie attended technical and art schools before being called to military service. Afterward, he settled in southern California and has lived there for twenty-five years.

I asked him to talk about himself.

Ralph McQuarrie: I'm a visually oriented type. I enjoy looking at things. In England, now, I'm enjoying looking at an environment totally different from anything I can see in California. The shapes, colors, and contours of things interest me, as do structures on landscapes, functional objects, and the effect of use and age upon them. It's social history, visual history, and it stands to reason there's more of it in England than in California! Machinery, chemical equipment, the hardware of our lives have always fascinated me, and from the age of four or five I got into the habit of making sketches of this kind of equipment.

Alan Arnold: Did you teach yourself?

McQ: When my family moved to Seattle I took a night course in technical art for about a year and learned enough to join the Boeing Aircraft Company there. I was very interested in planes. I loved the work and met a lot of people interested in commercial art. But then I had to go into the army for two years. When I got out I rejoined Boeing until I'd gotten enough money together to go to California, to attend art school in Los Angeles.

AA: How long did you stay there?

McQ: I was a student for two-and-a-half years, but I wasn't at all sure I wanted to be a commercial artist. I thought it would be like selling a commodity, like hats or shoes—lucrative but uninspiring. I left school not knowing exactly what to do. So I started working on my own. I did some illustrations of aircraft, steam engines, other sorts of machinery, and these got me a job as an illustrator with a group

that produced corporation-oriented magazines, annual reports, that kind of thing. I worked there a year and found it interesting. Then I became a technical illustrator in the aerospace field.

AA: How long did you stay in aerospace?

McQ: Through the sixties. I worked for CBS News on the Apollo flights, doing animated sequences that couldn't be covered live. Then I started doing film posters because what I'd been doing for CBS was really film effects, animation made to look realistic.

AA: How did your work in feature films begin?

McQ: I did a poster for a horror picture. That was a success, and the picture was a success. On the strength of that I began to get more posters to do for independent producers. Then two writers I know showed my paintings to Lucas who at that time was just finishing *THX-1138* and about to make *American Graffiti*. When we met he mentioned that he would like to do a really spectacular science-fiction picture.

AA: When did you begin to work with him?

McQ: By no means immediately. He had not yet finished *American Graffiti*. When that movie proved successful, he expanded his outline for *Star Wars*. He had gone to Universal, but they were not ready for something so different and were probably a little frightened of the budget. Anyway, who was going to see science-fiction movies then? Even when Fox purchased an interest in what George wanted to do, they did so cautiously.

AA: What did you do for *Star Wars*?

McQ: George had ideas about how his picture should look. In fact, I think the look of the picture was more interesting to him than the plot. The look of the great vistas, the alien lands, the structures, the spaceships, the robots, the costumes, and accessories was of fundamental interest to him. George at one time had been very interested in being an illustrator and could have been a brilliant science-fiction illustrator, I believe. He wanted to get what he could

see in his mind onto the screen. When he wrote he could see these things, but descriptions of visual things in the script were nevertheless kind of sketchy. I thought that what he expected from me was the look he hoped for—the light, the textures, the excitement he saw in his mind's eye. So we'd get together and talk about the scenes that typified the scale and scope of the picture visually. I also helped visualize the robots with a painting of C-3PO and R2-D2 crossing the desert.

AA: In what scale do you illustrate?

McQ: My paintings measure roughly twenty-two inches by ten inches. That's the format I pretty much keep to, but some of the paintings are a little larger. I made twenty or twenty-two illustrations for *Star Wars*. So far I've made thirty for *The Empire Strikes Back*. In addition, there are lots of pencil sketches. I think my paintings for *Star Wars* helped to reassure Fox that the picture was not going to be just a comic strip—it was going to be something awe inspiring. But I was simply interpreting George Lucas's conception.

AA: What kind of materials do you use?

McQ: Water colors, essentially. I use a combination of an acrylic medium, which is a paint that's water-proof once dry, and designer colors, which are an opaque water color you can use transparently or opaquely. I place a tone on the board and paint into it so I can relate every value from somewhere in the middle. I'll put in something bright and I'll put in something dark and thereby know my range.

AA: Although George Lucas is at the center, you surely draw on personal inspiration, too.

McQ: George was the inspiration for the *Star Wars* material. He'd written down what he wanted and had given me some sense of the quality he wanted to get. For example, I started to sketch Darth Vader on the information that George wanted him to be a tall, black figure with fluttering robes, incredibly strong but graceful and majestic, too. I thought he could wear something like a fisherman's helmet, an

enclosing helmet. So I started to sketch various shapes and designs. And George acted as a close guide on everything, eliminating this or that sketch.

AA: Yet, presumably, you conceived the look of some of the characters.

McQ: That's true. R2-D2 ended up like my original sketch. And, although somewhat changed, Darth Vader was a great deal like my sketch, too.

AA: What is the source of your interest in the fantastic?

McQ: I think it relates to my past experience. I have always been interested in the way things look. It wasn't a practical interest—I wasn't thinking of how these things could be used. My satisfaction came instead from simply looking at machinery, aircraft bulkheads, the tooling, the forgings, the colors. I'm very interested in how bits of things relate to the whole.

AA: Do you read fantasy?

McQ: Not especially. I have not read all that much science fiction or fantasy. To tell you the truth, I enjoy fact much more.

AA: What about art?

McQ: I enjoy the art galleries very much. I like the pre-Raphaelites. I like painters who put spooks into their pictures. Then those paintings become more than just fine art; they have stories to them. I also like the surrealists, such as Dali. Modern abstract expressionists I never did get into. I enjoy the work of David Hockney, who I think is a very interesting painter.

AA: How do you like working on the *Star Wars* films?

McQ: Essentially, my enjoyment as an artist comes from working with shapes and forms and colors. What is also stimulating in terms of George's stories is that they are not set in time. This gives me quite a sense of liberation. With this sort of freedom an illustrator's work is enormous fun.

Thursday, March 22

Billy Dee Williams has arrived to prepare for his role as Lando Calrissian.

Mark Hamill reminded us that three years ago *Star Wars* started shooting. I asked him whether it seemed like three years. "It was a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away," he replied.

Monday, March 26

George Lucas and Gary Kurtz held meetings with Robert Stigwood and took him on a tour of the sets; his company is negotiating for the record rights to the music track of *The Empire Strikes Back*.

Stigwood (*Jesus Christ, Superstar*; *Saturday Night Fever*, *Grease*, *Evita*) is one of the world's most successful showmen. Like the producers of *Star Wars*, he has played a part in bringing the public in their millions back to the theater and the cinema. These are men whose judgment of what the public wanted and would respond to has been proved overwhelmingly right.

At lunch today Mark Hamill told a story about his first meeting with Sir Alec Guinness which took place in Tunisia during the filming of *Star Wars*. Mark, who had just flown in from California to begin the role that would assure his fame, admitted to being terribly in awe of the distinguished actor. "But I really had no need to be," Mark said. "He was helpful and considerate from the beginning. On that first day he and Lady Guinness sketched the scenery. We moved on to a mosque. She kept on sketching, not realizing that it is forbidden to draw or photograph a holy place in Tunisia. Suddenly, an Arab rushed over, grabbed the sketch, and tore it up in anger. Sir Alec turned to me.

What had Lady Guinness done? I replied that the man was probably just the local art critic—at which Sir Alec burst out laughing. We got along famously.”

Today, Matmata, a small Tunisian town, has a sign in its center: “*Star Wars* was filmed here.”

Shooting continues on the ice-planet scenes with most of the principal performers. In another part of the studios Mark is taking a fencing lesson to prepare for future scenes.

Tuesday, March 27

The Rebel headquarters on frozen Hoth is under violent attack by Vader’s stormtroopers, a busy day for special effects because the bombardment causes a cave-in. Boulders of ice fall, steam escapes from the shattered ventilation shafts, and there are a variety of explosions. This set, so carefully devised and so intricately constructed, is being slowly wrecked before the cameras, but the wrecking is as painstaking as the building.

Yet what happens in front of the cameras is only part of the story in the life of a movie in the making. On the periphery other important things are happening including an interview that is taking place on Stage 5 against the background of a Star Destroyer under construction. Here an Austrian television unit will interview Gary Kurtz and Harrison Ford for “Apropos Film,” a program seen in most German-speaking territories. The television crew wanted Artoo and Threepio, too, but there are strict rules about the exposure of the nonhuman, robot, and masked characters. They can only be publicized *in* character or *out* of it on the grounds that make-believe is very fragile. In *Peter Pan*, if you see the wires the illusion is gone. Little boys *can’t* really fly, but believing they can is everything.

Tonight George Lucas returns to California. I asked Kershner whether, at any time, he had felt inhibited or compromised by Lucas's presence on the set. "Not at all," he replied. "It was like having the toymaker present, but he didn't play with the toys." That was very sensitive of the creator of *Star Wars*, since they are his toys we are manipulating.

Wednesday, March 28

On Stage 2, next to the one we are working on, a beautiful set is arising. It is the interior of a residential section of Cloud City on Bespin, the gaseous planet to which Han pilots the *Falcon* and takes refuge with its administrator, Lando Calrissian, while his spaceship undergoes repair.

Bespin has prospered due to its valuable gas resources and has remained neutral in the galactic wars. It has a highly polyglot population drawn from all over the galaxy, and its wealth has enabled the city to be designed with taste and style.

The influence is predominantly art deco, which superseded art nouveau as a decorative style. Art deco arose in the 1920s and seems to have been a result of the desire of designers to incorporate mechanistic and early technological influences into a decorative element. The Bespin sets use the deco motif very effectively indeed, with simulated marble floors in gleaming white trimmed with chrome in the interiors, and circular windows that reveal panoramas of the city floating amid the pink, plummy clouds of the gas planet.

Thursday, March 29

Today we filmed the scene in which a Tauntaun is discovered dead in the ice-cavern corral. Some of us

have grown rather fond of these curious mammals which the Rebels ride across the frozen plains of Hoth. They are a marvelous creation and not at all frightening after some acquaintance with them.

Isn't it likely, after all, that such animals should be found on a frozen planet, particularly if one considers the incredible, almost infinite variety of life forms on our own? Think of the experiments, failures, and successes that have befallen life patterns, from sea urchins to primates, during our evolution. It would be a very closed mind indeed that denied the existence of even more wonderful life forms on other planets in distant galaxies.

The more we come to know about what has happened to life on Earth through the millions of years since our planet was a chemical soup, the less implausible becomes fantasy. We are approaching the moment when we shall believe, as many have always believed, that anything man can imagine is not only possible, not merely probable, but *is*—somewhere in time and space.

Friday, March 30

While tests and rehearsals are taking place on Stage 2 for the Bespin sequences, the unit is at work on one of the most difficult of the ice-cavern scenes.

It's the scene in which the monstrous Wampa Ice Creature thrusts its hideous claws through a cavern wall—a scene that took a very long time to set up. We knew that if it were not achieved in one take the whole thing would have to be mounted again for another try, and that would consume costly time.

But we failed to get it the first time. It just didn't work.

Sometimes, a set-up that looks good on the drawing board doesn't work visually. The film business is an amalgam of skills. It's seldom possible to direct the

fault to a particular area; so many hands have made a contribution. Kersh explained: "In this scene we're trying to suggest more than will actually be seen. We need to use the audience's imagination as a means of giving color to our coloring book. It's no good just being literal in a shot like this. The effect must be one of illusion, a sleight of hand, a conjuring trick. So we're going to try again."

That's film talk, of course, as special as the industry itself. But the fact of the matter is that the concept didn't work. Wampas smashing through ice walls are not everyday events. Filmmakers contrive things that haven't happened before and are unlikely to happen again. It was a brave failure. The shot will eventually be accomplished.

Visitors to the set today included an important group of bankers. One wonders what they would have made of this entry in the script supervisor's log: "Wrapping up. Unable to continue with this shot as wall too strong for ice monster to break through. Also, the man inside the monster suit has been there three hours and is suffering from stomach cramps."

Monday, April 2

The film business has come a long way since popcorn sales were discovered to be a lucrative spin-off from public attendance at the movies. Nowadays, product-selling related to successful films is a huge, sophisticated, and multinational industry.

A reminder that the making of *The Empire Strikes Back* is a business within a business was evident today when a group of merchandisers visited the studios.

These executives from the giant General Mills conglomerate and its British subsidiaries had traveled to the heart of things, to where it all begins. They are responsible for a simply staggering range of products or, more correctly, by-products. One firm alone mar-

kets no less than thirty toys and games inspired by *Star Wars*.

Essentially, the characters and space hardware are the starting point. These have been produced in many sizes and materials. There is a cuddly, teddy-bearlike Chewbacca big enough for a child to take to bed. There is a splendid remote-controlled Artoo that's the next best thing to keeping a pet. Certain characters, among them Darth Vader, are represented in a range of functional items including cookie jars, piggy banks, pencil sharpeners, and drinking mugs.

There are do-it-yourself construction kits, molding kits, painting kits, play kits, and poster kits. There are jigsaw puzzles. There is a delightful eight-piece set of the cantina characters. There is a projector for showing slides from the movie. There are pencils, rulers, pens, digital watches, erasers, jewelry, ice-cream bars, and candies.

If you wish, you could wash with *Star Wars* soap, soak in a *Star Wars* bubble bath, dry yourself with *Star Wars* towels, slap on a little *Star Wars* perfume, put on *Star Wars* slippers, and read by a *Star Wars* night light before getting into *Star Wars* pajamas and going to bed between *Star Wars* sheets—in a room decorated with *Star Wars* wallpaper!

Anyone for popcorn?

This evening Kurtz was host at a dinner for Irvin Kershner and the four principal actors. They went to a Japanese restaurant because the quiet atmosphere and private rooms there encourage conversation. On a picture as difficult as this one, it is important that the professional relationships between the cast and the filmmakers be as casual and friendly as possible.

Tuesday, April 3

Sometimes, the *Star Wars* cast of principals reminds me of a company of mummers, an honorable tradition.

Mummers were the traveling players, usually masked, who took folk plays to the people in the Middle Ages. In England and Ireland they went on doing so until fairly recent times.

Then again, there are moments when there is a circus feel about the company. Especially when you see little Kenny Baker beside Dave Prowse or Des Webb, both exceptionally tall men. Des plays the ice creature.

Very small people and very tall people have problems going about their lives, it seems. One thing Kenny told me was especially interesting. When children in public express delight at the sight of such a tiny man their mothers invariably scold them and pull them aside. He wished parents would have more sense: Their scolding gives the children some feelings of guilt.

The same criterion can be applied to questions of color. Prejudice from the past is still the worst influence, and it is often transmitted by parents. In a press release I had described Billy Dee Williams as a *black* actor to illustrate the fact that the cast is becoming even more varied. I hadn't meant to set him apart, but Billy felt it did. He is a fine, sensitive actor, and a serious-minded man. But past usage of the word has made him sensitive to it. Yet, in this instance, black had been used to express an interesting distinction. "I long for the time when I'll be thought of simply as an actor," he said.

In the *Star Wars* galaxy there is more than multi-racialism. Life forms of an infinite variety intermingle, communicate, and thrive. These societies are multi-specied. Take Chewbacca, for example. Children love this creation. But what is he? Animal or human? Has he a race, a religion? None of that matters to kids.

Wednesday, April 4

We are all most anxious to complete work on the ice-cavern set and move to Stage 2 where the bright

new Cloud City interiors, with their founts of crystal and cambers of chrome, are ready. The move will probably be made tomorrow.

Meanwhile, the producer's day includes a meeting to discuss "the walker's foot." Intrigued, I asked about the implications of so curious an item on the agenda.

It seems that a plan is under debate to rent space at another studio, none being available here, to shoot an eighteen-foot-long mechanical foot in the act of crushing a snowspeeder during the battle on Hoth. Later, I learned that the plan is to be dropped. The gargantuan foot will not be built, and instead the sequence will be done in miniature in California.

Another meeting involving the producer was to discuss "a minor union problem." I did not probe as to what the minor problem might be. Union-management relations are a continuing process, of course, and because so many unions are involved in the film industry, the process is necessarily a delicate one. The "problem" could have concerned anything from overtime pay to the matter of tea breaks.

Of England it's alleged that everything there stops for tea, but this is not true in the film business. It is taken on the run, without interruption to the work continuing on the floor. Morning and afternoon, trolleys bearing urns of tea and coffee are wheeled onto the soundstages by ladies whom you suspect have spent the interim studying their horoscopes. They are totally immune to surprise, even when the lineup for tea includes, as it did today on the ice-cavern set, a platoon of snowtroopers in white armored suits, a robot, Darth Vader, and the Wampa Ice Creature. The imperturbable tea ladies served them all with their characteristic cool, as calm as Everest explorers confronted by an abominable snowman. They know that anyone who enjoys a cup of tea can't be all that abominable.

Thursday, April 5

We have moved to Beshpin's Cloud City, although we have had to leave a camera crew and ancillary unit on Hoth to complete the scenes there. Kurtz is directing this second unit for the time being. Kersh has begun shooting amid the harmonious white interiors of Cloud City. In fact, we are slipping further behind schedule, and two units are required to keep up a good pace.

The first scenes on Beshpin show the arrival of the travelers at the residence, their walk to the dining room with their host, Lando Calrissian, and Carrie's scenes opposite Harrison in which Han finds the princess changed from her travel-stained wear into an attractive three-piece outfit and looking very alluring.

I have talked on tape to Billy Dee Williams for the first time. He agreed with me that Lando, the most important of the new characters to join the saga, is well conceived and capable of a lot of development as the saga continues. He's one of those fictional people who "change before your very eyes" as the story unfolds, starting out as a character you want to see get kicked in the teeth yet becoming in time one you're rooting for. He's a good contrast to the more predictable figures in the saga.

Friday, April 6

The second unit has returned from Norway.

It seems that the weather kept up its tough battle with them and from March 12 to April 3, when they finished filming, there had only been five days of really good shooting conditions. But every morning the crew

set out at 6 A.M. from Finse, climbing as close to the glacier as the blizzards and white-outs permitted. They managed three days of filming on the glacier itself and spent up to eleven hours at a stretch on it in temperatures ten degrees below zero and in a bitter, forty-mile-an-hour wind that brought a chill factor of thirty degrees below.

There were numerous cases of frostbite, fatigue, and flu. Even the thirty-five tough, young Norwegian Red Cross rescue skiers, used as extras in the battle scenes, found the going hard and at one time had to build an igloo to shelter in. On another occasion a group of them dug a hole six feet under the snow in which to sit out a particularly dangerous white-out. And the hearty lunches, convoyed daily to the locations in enormous thermoses by the two indefatigable, weather-beaten women on skis, froze before the food could be spooned into the mouths of the hard-pressed filmmakers.

Finally, helicopters and tracked vehicles were marshaled for a successful assault on the glacier, but not before one vehicle got embedded in a lake of ice. On the last day there was a huge avalanche—which the local people explained as a sign that spring had arrived.

At the end of it all, the crew gave a party at the ski lodge for the local people who had so tirelessly helped and hosted them. Gifts were exchanged. Medallions bearing the *Star Wars* insignia were presented to all, and with particular thanks to those two intrepid women muffled in wool who had so unfailingly skied up to the glacier with the lunchtime meal.

Given another avalanche or two this week, one supposes, Finse will be full of the joys of spring!

After hearing this sobering account of the filming in Norway, I took refuge on the synthetic ice of Stage 1 where Kurtz is continuing his directing. He is, I suspect, enjoying his directorial chores. Most technically minded producers do.

Besides, he was being watched by a party of visiting

schoolchildren from British Columbia, their complexions as bright and ruddy as their anoraks. What they saw wasn't very spectacular, just the dogged, methodical process of obtaining the remaining shots in the ice cavern, but they found it all absorbing.

Everything about a film factory, of course, is of interest to the young. If one ever gets blasé about this most fascinating of industries, then it's time to quit. I have remained almost totally untechnical over the years and perhaps because of it I am perpetually in a state of wonderment, as were those youngsters from British Columbia.

This evening the cast and crew saw a private screening of the new film *Norma Rae*. Because there is no time to go out, Kurtz has decided to periodically screen new films for the group in order to give them a rest from thinking about *Empire* and to let them see what is currently happening in the industry.

Monday, April 9

Today's call sheet is a colorful one. We are shooting the Cloud City interiors which require the presence, not only of the principals, but also of some unusual extras portraying members of the Beshin community.

The Ugnaughts, or hogmen, of Beshin are certainly among the most interesting additions to the saga's social groups since the Jawas of Tatooine. Their dwarfed and aged look, I suppose, derives from their work in the gas mines. One is continually being surprised by the brainchildren of the creator of these fantasies.

Tuesday, April 10

Carrie Fisher isn't well. It looks as if she'll have to rest for a few days, with consequent changes to the week's shooting schedule. She's got the flu, paradoxically at a time when the English weather is at last hinting of spring.

It has been a long, hard winter in England for everyone, and not least for the government, which has fallen. The only consolation about elections, Kurtz reminded me, is that they have the effect of turning people away from their television sets to other forms of entertainment.

Carrie and her costars, Harrison and Mark, are leading quiet lives in London, primarily because they are working such long hours. When on call, the actors rise at six in the morning to be in make-up at the studios by 7:15 A.M. They are not in London for the first time, having been here through the long, hot summer of 1976 making *Star Wars*. Carrie also spent a year at drama school in London, and Harrison has made two other features here. While none of them is a compulsive tourist, Carrie is a frequent moviegoer with a preference for old movies. She sees them at the Mayfair Theatre, which puts on impressive programs of the golden oldies.

This week she is moving to a home leased to her by Eric Idle of Monty Python celebrity. It is in St. John's Wood, one of the last inner-London sections to retain its pleasant residential atmosphere.

Wednesday, April 11

Work is now complete on the ice-cavern set. Scenes preliminary to Luke's confrontation with Vader on the

planet of Bespin are being shot on Stage 2.

At lunchtime, Kurtz joined three Fox publicists for a discussion about this summer's reissue of *Star Wars*. Some seventy territories are reissuing the picture, but two countries—Norway and Italy—are not. The filming in Norway of *The Empire Strikes Back* was such a boost to *Star Wars* that the original movie hasn't yet ceased its first run there. As for Italy, it seems that an Italian summer is not a season to reissue *any* movie. Everyone takes to the beaches or the hills.

After the day's work the cast and crew watched a rough-cut assembly of rushes amounting to about twelve minutes of screen time. The footage looked excellent—the Norwegian material and the early romantic scene between Han and the princess in particular. Except for those concerned with editing the new movie, this is the first time anyone has seen the three principals in their *Star Wars* roles since the original film. There is a more mature look to Mark, Harrison, and Carrie, which enhances them. Harrison and Carrie looked especially attractive in the love scene, and they are certainly more skilled as actors. Three years' passage has improved their techniques. Carrie's features in close-up are sensitively and cleverly used. It is true *screen* acting in the manner of the thirties. It's clear that Carrie's visits to the Mayfair Theatre have more than mere relaxation value; she is studying her craft.

Thursday, April 12

Talked to young Jeremy Bulloch, the actor who is playing Boba Fett. An important new creation, Fett is the bounty hunter who trails Han across space and places him in Vader's grasp.

Fett is another masked character, and it is interesting to note how very ready actors are to lose their personal identities for the opportunity to play roles

in the saga, knowing that their faces will never be seen.

The fact of simply having a job is not the basic reason. The appeal of being associated with success is a factor. Another is that the characters have such distinct identities that they lend prestige to the actors playing them. But the paramount reason is the simplest: Actors love dressing up.

Jeremy, a sturdy six-footer, is not only delighted to be playing the role but is thrilled with his costume. For all its built-in gadgetry (holsters for laser guns, digital switches, a shoulder pack incorporating a rocket), the costume has a period swagger about it reminiscent of something out of *Richard II*—in which, incidentally, Jeremy has just played Hotspur in a BBC-TV production. The Boba Fett costume has armored breastplates, knee pads, and a codpiece, features which are straight out of the Middle Ages.

The character, like the costume, is a composite. Although Fett is a *galactic* bounty hunter, his leather ammunition belt and spiked boots are reminiscent of the Old West. There's also a dark hint of that period in the scalps that hang from his right shoulder. His "saddle" is a beat-up spacecraft, but his kind have been around for a long, long time in Westerns.

Tuesday, April 17

After a four-day Easter holiday the company resumed work on the Cloud City interiors. Rarely has there been such idyllic spring weather, and cast and crew took full advantage of it. Some, like Carrie, went to the countryside. She rested up at an old inn in the village of Slaughter in the Cotswolds and is now fit again. Irvin Kershner went on a sentimental journey into East Anglia, the flatlands of Suffolk and Norfolk where there are still American air bases. He was stationed at one of them while in England in the U.S.

Air Force over twenty years ago. But Harrison was unlucky. Bedridden with the flu, he also suffered from the incessant ringing of a security alarm right outside his window. No one could turn it off. "If I'd had a laser gun I would have shot at it," he told me. Nevertheless, today he was well and working on the Bespinn set, watched by his two young sons who are on school vacation from California.

Wednesday, April 18

Media inquiries now average around 130 a week and they come from all over the world: from Alaska to Brazil; from a Norwegian provincial daily to an Australian woman's magazine; from Warsaw to South Africa. . . .

It's difficult to budget publicity; it's such an intangible. But show business and publicity are blood brothers. If you have something you want the public to be made aware of, you bang the drum—at the right time. You parade through the town saying the circus is coming. All the great showmen, Disney, Goldwyn, Korda, and the like, believed in publicity. It is part of the ethos of the motion-picture business. In fact, Hollywood was largely created by publicity.

Thursday, April 19

Asked to define the essence of the *Star Wars* saga for a Cannes Film Festival promotion, Irvin Kershner came up with the following: "The *Star Wars* saga is pure fantasy, an exotic trip, a magical landscape familiar as our dreams. It speaks directly to that part of us that is forever young." Well, that sounds good—and I should know because I wrote it for him.

Friday, April 20

On the *Star Wars* stage the full-scale, twenty-three-ton *Millennium Falcon* was floated into position today by means of hoverpads filled with compressed air. These air-filled cushions were similar to those used by the giant Channel hovercraft. The *Falcon*, after having been transported in sixteen sections aboard a convoy of trucks, is now the impressive showpiece of the ice-hangar set completing construction on the big new stage.

Monday, April 23

Mark Hamill has been acting upside down.

I should explain that Mark's current scenes show him captured by a ferocious ice creature which badly mauls him. These scenes are set on Hoth and tie in with material already shot in Norway. The creature, having dragged Luke to its lair, suspends him head-down on a cross-bar to await a bloody end.

Mark takes these unusual demands of a working day very much in his stride. "It's fun," he says. "Think how many guys spend their days driving trucks, working in offices, clerking in stores. Wouldn't they all just love to change places with me?"

One soon realizes when working with Mark that he's an astute, disciplined, and very professional young man. For example, when he meets the press, or feeds copy to a publicist, he knows exactly how to spice his conversation with quotable material. He's learned the knack, indispensable to show people, of talking to the media. The trick is to give a reporter the feeling that he or she is the one person you wanted to talk to at

that particular time. You "feed in" the story line, knowing that if you don't the reporter will. The worst interviews are those with reporters who have decided in advance what they're going to write. Mark knows how to preempt them.

Tuesday, April 24

We continue to have two units working simultaneously on separate stages, and I think this situation will continue through the end of shooting. Producer Kurtz has put on his director's hat again for the scenes that remain to be done on the Bespin interior; Kersh has moved on to Darth Vader's Star Destroyer on Stage 5.

In total we are using eight stages at Elstree, including the newly built *Star Wars* stage which will come into operation in May. At that time we shall start shooting on the vast set depicting the Rebel ice hangar with its full-scale *Falcon* and snowspeeders.

Meanwhile, Stuart Freeborn has been working on Yoda, a creation whose debut will be a high spot in the picture. It is essential that this new character come as a surprise to audiences if the story is not to lose impact. Yoda first appears when Luke comes to the planet of Dagobah searching for the Jedi Master. Luke has no idea what this fount of knowledge will look like and does not at first believe that the curious personage of Yoda embodies the Force. Luke's inability to recognize him *must* be shared by the audience.

What does wisdom look like?

One thinks of very great age (Yoda is at least 800 years old) and that he may be nearly all head. I think of something that moves quietly, fastidiously, and of a Third Eye, one eye that's All Seeing.

It will be interesting to see if I am right about Yoda. As yet no one has been permitted to see him.

Wednesday, April 25

On the BBC radio last night, *Star Wars* was referred to in a talk about the life of Charles Dickens.

An unlikely relationship? Well, Dickens, apparently, was very enthusiastic about what is now known in the trade as "secondary exploitation," the area of spin-offs from a main product. The speaker cited the success of *Star Wars* as being a contemporary example of the kind of thing that followed the publication of the *Pickwick Papers* in the nineteenth century.

After the publication of the first installment of what was to be the Pickwick saga, Dickens became a pop idol of a sort. Technology played a part in that, too. An entertainment the public wanted—serialized stories—was available at a time when the technical means of getting it to them in huge, cheap editions had just been perfected. It was the beginning of the era of bestsellers.

The effect was sensational. Dickens, who hugely enjoyed success, cooperated enthusiastically in the secondary exploitation of his novels, though the term had not yet been invented. Soon there were Pickwick hats, Pickwick waistcoats, Pickwick pickle jars, Pickwick pipes, and all manner of other items on the market. H. G. Wells, a later bestseller, referred to this lucrative business in products related to fictional creations as the "Whoosh!" Dickens took a great personal interest in it, making sure that whatever bore the Pickwick endorsement was well made and value for the money.

Thursday, April 26

If fantasy is what it is all about, then the scenes being shot on Stage 5 are vintage *Star Wars*. Darth Vader

has summoned aboard his Star Destroyer a motley group of galactic bounty hunters, and to the one who succeeds in capturing Han Solo he offers a tempting reward. The startling conception of the bounty hunters is what gives the sequence its inimitable *Star Wars* flavor, underlying the fact that for all the imitators and plagiarists who have sought to duplicate the famous movie, none has succeeded in approaching its ability to present outright fantasy.

Who but the makers of *Star Wars* could have conceived so imaginative a posse of opportunists as these bounty hunters who make their debut in *The Empire Strikes Back*? One has the head of a lobster, another a reptile's head, another, eight feet tall, is a battle-scarred war machine. Once you have created a climate of acceptance, people will say, "Of course, in that netherworld of the imagination there is a certain zany logic about it all." Once tuned in to the general ethos of the thing, then, as with *Alice in Wonderland*, the improbable is entirely plausible.

Space fantasies are proliferating, but the characters and creations of the *Star Wars* saga are what set it apart. Some of the recent special-effects pictures are so inferior as to endanger the public's appetite for the genre. Special effects alone will not sell a picture but at their best they contribute enormously to enjoyment. From 2001 onward the sight of great spaceships majestically cruising the skies has been profoundly moving. There's beauty in it. One says, "Ah, yes, that is how it will look, though I will never see it." I think *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* gave one that feeling, though the story came through better in the novel. Which shows that the most potent medium for conveying splendor is still the imagination.

Friday, April 27

Actors like Michael Culver, Julian Glover, Kenneth Colley, and Michael Sheard, who are on Stage 5 today playing Darth Vader's fleet commanders, are representative of a special breed. They spend much more time in the theater than in film studios. They are theater-oriented actors who bring something of a backstage atmosphere to a film set as they sit between takes talking theater. Because the theater seldom provides year-round work, film cameos are a bonus to these performers, but I don't think they enjoy acting in front of cameras as much as before audiences. Donald Wolfit, the supreme example of the breed, used to call his screen acting "cooking" in contrast to what he considered to be the more creative things he did with a live audience in front of him, although his *authority* spilled over into many a fine film characterization. So it is with the actors playing Vader's aides. They, and others like them, are the grist of English theater companies like the National Theatre, the Prospect Theatre, the Royal Shakespeare Company, and the Royal Court Theatre, but when called on for film cameos they do marvelous work. I've noticed that in the *Star Wars* pictures even the smallest roles go to experienced players, a policy that pays off in terms of the quality of the finished product.

Monday, April 30

There are eight Artoos in use for *The Empire Strikes Back*. Kenny Baker uses two and they are lighter and more comfortable than the one he used in *Star Wars*. Three are dummy versions which can be damaged when the story calls for it, and three are remote-controlled.

These remote-controlled robots are very advanced pieces of integrated-circuit technology. Andrew Kelly of the special-effects department claims they are very nearly foolproof, incorporating silicon-chip circuitry and refinements never before used in radio-controlled models. The R2 units are fascinating to watch as they move about the sets guided by unseen hands that keep them from bumping into people and objects. Yet it seems that even a robot can be bad tempered. When an electrician on the set put a 5,000-volt oscillator into an electrical panel close to where an Artoo was working today, the robot nearly exploded, letting out shrieks of displeasure.

If operated in open spaces away from any radio interference, these robots could be controlled from as far as half a mile away; but in the studios, where there are many walkie-talkies and other short-wave instruments in use, the control has to be much closer.

Remote-control devices whose uses have just begun to be explored are a part of the silicon-chip revolution. When *The Battle of Britain* was filmed just ten years ago, the filmmakers had terrible problems with their remote-controlled planes. If they were filming it today they would have a much easier time. Robots are now very reliable indeed, and the use that will be made of them in years to come will surprise us all, I think.

Tuesday, May 1

Filming will soon begin on the *Star Wars* stage where a marvelous set of the Rebel hangar on Hoth is under construction. More than 100 craftsmen are working to build the set, including no fewer than 59 carpenters. The full-size *Millennium Falcon*, an X-wing fighter, and four Rebel armored snowspeeders, craft introduced in this film, are all there. It's being debated whether this set will be open to media coverage. There are arguments for and against, of course,

and the upcoming rerelease of *Star Wars* is a factor that may tip the scale. From what I gather, Twentieth Century-Fox would like the wraps off our picture. Whatever is decided, I hope they don't reveal too much.

Wednesday, May 2

When you look at the filming of Vader's meditation sphere on the Star Destroyer set, the stage at first glance seems fairly static. But the call sheet today requires such items as "a hologram light, a meditation light effect, a Moviola with a plate scene, a camera crane, and various scar and wound effects"—and it becomes clear that behind it all is a vast amount of technical expertise. Some of the sets are intricate frames for opticals and special effects to be added later. George Lucas, describing the traumas of the final stages of completing *Star Wars* when its potential was unknown and in some quarters doubted, said, "The buck stops at opticals." To get the financial backing for intricate and costly technical work in labs away from the studios was not easy at the time when Lucas most needed financing to back the faith he had in his picture.

Thursday, May 3

In Britain it's polling day for the general election. The booths opened at 8 A.M., but most film technicians are on the set by then so many will vote before the polls close at nine tonight.

Movie people are reticent about politics. I think that living in a world of make-believe dulls the political mind. Yet some writers and movie stars have suffered because of their political stances. I remember Lillian

Hellman years ago telling me about some of the things she had seen in Germany in the 1930s; she had just written *Watch on the Rhine*, but she would not write the story that became *Julia* until many years later. I think Irvin Kershner is passionately concerned about human rights, too—about the rights of the individual and the danger of giving too much power to the police in a society panicked by rising crime rates. The United States, it seems to me, with its Constitution and Bill of Rights has always had more built-in protection for the individual than has Britain. I'm told there are people who have tried to read a political attitude into *Star Wars*; personally, I can't see any stance at all save the one you can read into most Westerns: that villainy must be undone if the human spirit is to be kept brightly shining. However, I suspect that public receptivity to fantasy, futurology, and science fiction is an expression of discontent. But there's nothing very new in that.

Friday, May 4

Margaret Thatcher has won the election and become Britain's first woman prime minister. To celebrate their victory her party took a half page of advertising space in the *London Evening News*. Their message, referring to the day of victory, was "May the Fourth Be With You, Maggie. Congratulations," further proof of the extent to which *Star Wars* has influenced us all.

Tuesday, May 8

Some of the old customs, like the language, of the sixteenth century were taken to the New World by the early English settlers and there they survived while

in England itself they faded. I was reminded of this yesterday when the Kurtz family gave a baby shower for Mark and Marilou Hamill who are going to be parents in a few weeks.

The shower took place at the Kurtz home in Buckinghamshire, a fine, rambling homestead with a touch of history. It's known that Queen Alexandra (wife of Edward VII) visited there, and in beds around the lawn there are Alexandra roses.

Baby showers are not known in England any more. Nor, for that matter, are hundreds of words that are pure Elizabethan but no longer in usage here. When pedantic Britishers hear Americans use such words they often think that some misuse is being made of the language, not having the wit to realize that an older, purer English is being spoken.

So it is with old customs. No doubt, like Mother's Day or Halloween, the baby shower could have a resurgence here. In America, according to Meredith Kurtz, "the growing consciousness of male participation in the rituals of birth" has set the climate for a revival of the old custom.

Mark stood up well to the sentimentality of the occasion while Marilou presided gracefully over the opening of gifts. Then came a treasure hunt in the gardens, which a particularly cold May Day made a bit of an endurance test. But as I drove back to London amid the returning holiday traffic, cars full of fractious children, dogs, and the remains of picnics, I thought how much saner was that scene in an English country garden. However, a decision has to be made when Luke Skywalker adds the sword of fatherhood to his armory of lightsabers. Do we tell the fans?

Wednesday, May 9

We have moved to Stage 8 for Hoth battle scenes showing the Rebel pilots (Dack, Wedge, Zev, Hobbie,

and Luke) flying their snowspeeders in attack against the Armageddon-like Imperial snow walkers. But the monstrous walkers are not on the set. They will be inserted in the blue screen by the special-effects experts at Industrial Light and Magic in California. I've never before worked on movie sets like these; they are pieces of a jigsaw puzzle.

Thursday, May 10

George Lucas has been with us since the weekend. I saw him standing in the conservatory at Wallingford House, the Kurtz home in Buckinghamshire, in a group that included Kurtz, Kersh, and editor Paul Hirsch. There they were, filmmakers framed in glass, each very different physically, all bearded, like figures in a Degas painting.

From my position in the tea tent I had no way of knowing what they were discussing, but they looked at ease. These are not men whom it is easy to read. The film is behind schedule, but their demeanor reflected no such anxiety. Kersh, however, is less abstruse. He has been saying to me, "Do you have an angle?" "Are you aware of what goes on *behind* the camera?" "Are you getting a point of view?" He is really saying, "Are you seeing it from my angle?" Well, no, I'm not. That would be of interest to movie buffs. It would serve the director's legend, but it would not be the overall view. It is the spectator who really sees the game.

Friday, May 11

How far behind are we?

It depends on whom you ask.

Day by day, the painstaking work goes on. Currently, the action is in the Cloud City corridors and

dining room, the sequence in which Han and the princess, while guests of Lando Calrissian, are led into the presence of Darth Vader and that most dangerous of bounty hunters, Boba Fett. Meanwhile, on another planet, another stage, Luke still leads his Rebel pilots in defense of their vulnerable base on Hoth.

Thus the story unfolds, out of sequence, unchronologically as is the manner of most films in the making. The bits of the jigsaw puzzle are being carved for piecing together later. Each piece is expensive. Delays cost thousands of dollars. But a film crew is an amalgam of craftsmen and technicians. Some of its members are a combination of both, and chief among these is the director. Directors strive for perfection. They deny this to be their motivation because perfection is a most expensive quality; yet their legitimate ambition is to overlay the finished film with a clear creative signature.

So if you ask Kersh about the schedule, he'll prevaricate with deft wisdom.

"You can say we are behind," he told me. "Actually, a schedule is a very peculiar thing. Very arbitrary. A schedule was drawn up. I never approved it and said it probably couldn't be done—we have too many gadgets. But we tried to shoot for it, and now have fallen behind. Not disastrously, but we have fallen behind. I'd like to speed things up. But there is no realistic schedule with a film like this because nobody can foresee the day-to-day problems."

The production diary can only record them: "2:15 P.M., Resumed following lunch but had to wait for a gun which had shaken loose and had to be modified; 5:30 P.M., Black velvet caught fire from arc, was extinguished but had to be replaced; 6 P.M., Magazine clutch jammed on both magazines. Changing mags.; 6:45 P.M., Ready to shoot when Darth Vader's lights went off. Delay in fixing it due to complex fuse problem in control box."

Kersh again: "George and Gary know that I pressure myself more than they can possibly pressure me. It's a matter of pride to me to get the film done fast,

to get it done well. I understand the need for compromise. There is no such thing as a perfect shot, a perfect film. The purpose of film is not to make a monument to oneself.

"The purpose of film is to take a story and communicate it as best you can for the money you have. But a certain amount of magic is involved, and you can adjust a great deal. I hate the word compromise. You *adjust* to the needs of the moment; you *adjust* to the fact that you may have to cut out a scene you're not sure of. Compromise suggests I'm doing second best. Flexibility is the essential factor in a big picture like this."

So do you give up the struggle for perfection?

Kersh: "The thing that you learn in directing is that no matter how complex the shooting, you have to remain sensitive to the people around you or the machine will ultimately take over. If you don't keep in mind the essential humanity of it all, technique will dominate. Then, suddenly, all you've got are technically fine shots, technically fine performances, a story being told but with something lacking, something that is mysterious and indefinable. What is really lacking is someone guiding the mechanism, the *ghost* in the machine.

"So I am constantly talking with the actors, looking back over the story, rethinking the concept. Of course, there's a tremendous gap between what is intended and what is possible. Changes take place from moment to moment. On-the-spot, interpretative decisions are vital, but I never see them as authoritative decisions. I have constant feedback from George, Gary, and the actors."

Star Wars had imperfections for which there was neither time nor money to correct. It was backed by faith, but faith is not an element in a budget. *The Empire Strikes Back* can take no such chances. It has to be exactly right. It is financed by Lucasfilm; the producers *are* the enterprise. If they are satisfied with the footage being shot there are no critics to ameliorate.

"Normally, I would never show any footage beyond the rushes to the producers," Kersh says. "Usually, I

like to complete the editing, rough it into some sort of complete form, and then show it, to give an overall impression. At first, I told George and Gary that this is what I would do. Then I thought about it and said to myself, 'Why am I standing on contract? I'm not dealing with studio departments. This is not a Hollywood production being controlled by a studio. I'm dealing with people who are committed and love it and are trying to make the best picture they can. George is a very fine editor.' So I changed my mind. George is taking back to California with him fifty minutes of footage (the battle scenes), and they'll rough it out there. These are people who understand work in progress. There is no ego in this picture."

Not even a ghost of one?

Monday, May 14

This journal is a notebook. Much takes place that I don't record but cover in publicity releases and tape recordings. Keeping a journal requires disciplines different from the publicity work. It's introspective, like talking to oneself. In the angled phraseology of publicity release material one cannot get a real view of how things are. The press release expresses the corporate view.

A personalized view is very different. Its insights are more demanding and use creative juices vulnerable to everything around one. Actors know this. The most sensitive of them genuinely find it difficult, and in certain cases impossible, to combine their performance during a studio day with a press interview, especially if the journalist is of the type who met with Carrie Fisher today. She worked her way into the studio under false pretenses, and poor Carrie was her victim.

I took one look at this zinc-eyed lady and said to myself, "She's a cannibal." She had been phoning Kersh at odd hours ostensibly seeking an interview

with him; then she used him as a credential for an appointment with Carrie, her actual prey.

It is easy for me to say that my protective instincts were aroused, because I have seen her type before. They are international vultures who feed on the landscape of wounds that is the private life of many a movie star. Their assignments are conditional on getting at the raw meat and this entails a sort of rape—which is how Carrie herself described the encounter to me later.

Carrie is extremely vulnerable, it seems to me, as well as being highly strung. She is a Pickford without a Griffith. Kersh's main interest is getting a good performance from her. I'd like to see her in more protective hands both as a performer and as a person.

I watched her today on Stage 2. As Princess Leia she had to run over to Han, who has been tortured by Darth Vader, and whisper the line, "What are they doing to you?" It was well said and her features reflected the strain of the ordeal. But sometimes, off the set, that strain can still be seen. When you are young and subject to notorieties not of your making, it is difficult to keep things in perspective.

Yesterday a London newspaper carried an interview with Eddie Fisher in which the fifty-year-old entertainer, Carrie's father, bared his soul to British journalist Roderick Mann (now based in Los Angeles) beside the pool at the Beverly Hills Hotel. But there was a motive in the soul-baring—a book, it seems, is being ghosted for Eddie.

"I'm putting everything into it," promised the faded star, to which Mr. Mann added with enthusiasm: "The autobiography on which he is working with a collaborator should prove to be a very saleable property indeed. After all, Fisher's life—his four wives, his many love affairs, his long drug addiction, his gambling, his fall from the starry heights—is the stuff of a Harold Robbins novel."

Mr. Fisher may be right in thinking he'll make a great deal of money from his book—he's already turned down a million dollars for the rights. Failure is worth

even more than success in the open market if the material is salacious enough.

No wonder Carrie is confused. Journalist friends tell me that every gossip writer in America would like to talk to Carrie right now. Gossip. As a young publicist I once made a naive approach to Tallulah Bankhead. I asked her to feed me some gossip for the columnists. Not surprisingly, she turned blue. "Never mention that word to me again," she said. "It's an obscenity." I never did. We became wonderful friends.

Tuesday, May 15

The statement issued by the production office today to the effect that filming must begin on the new *Star Wars* stage this Friday "regardless of our schedule status at that time" has been met with some skepticism on the floor. At present we are working inside the *Millennium Falcon* cockpit. It is detailed, effects-related, and time-consuming work in cramped conditions and, to the observer, is unspectacular. Yet it is the setting for some very tense scenes.

The assistant directors are always a good barometer to the way things are, and they do not see us getting through this and other work this week. They say we won't move to the big stage until the middle of next week.

Two units are at work, of course, on separate stages, and a curious development from this is that Peter Suschitzky has become a rampant bicyclist, peddling briskly from one stage to another to fulfill his lighting chores. This inspired mode of travel was brought to my attention by Pat Carr, our assistant production manager, who had to order some bicycle clips for him.

It is excellent news that John Barry is returning to direct the second unit. His availability to direct follows his having stepped aside from the direction of *Saturn 3*

which is being filmed now at Shepperton Studios. Shortly after the film went into production, Barry was replaced as director by Stanley Donen.

In the film business the big break sometimes comes unexpectedly, and sometimes it is as easily snatched away. But you can never destroy a true talent. Knocks and disappointments refine it. All the same, it must have been a grim disappointment to John Barry to have his story taken out of his hands. The pleasure is that he has rejoined so many of his colleagues from *Star Wars*. "It is like coming home," he told me on the set today.

I learned that before George Lucas returned to California last weekend he and Gary Kurtz took Sir Alec Guinness to lunch at the distinguished actor's favorite restaurant—Neal's in Covent Garden. I cannot yet get a definite statement as to whether Sir Alec will re-create his role as Ben Kenobi. He has not been well, I understand. Stories go around the business (one of which was most uncharitably repeated by actor Sir John Mills on a television talk show) that Sir Alec did not really know what *Star Wars* was about when he played Ben Kenobi, only to become a millionaire as a result of having worked for a percentage of the take. No doubt this is an exaggeration. But Ben Kenobi is well established in the script of the present film, and so presumably Sir Alec can ask what he wants to repeat the role. All this is chit-chat, I know, but one wonders how the problem, if it arises, of having Ben without Sir Alec could be solved. Could he be interpolated from the previous film as a hologram or simply be a disembodied voiceover? Anything is possible in film.

Wednesday, May 16

That freak elements of chance decide people's fate is shown in the curious story of Peter Mayhew, the

gentle giant of a man who plays Chewbacca, the 400-year-old Wookiee in the *Star Wars* saga.

Although his own features are never seen, Mayhew, who is seven feet, two inches tall, has imparted something of his own likable nature to the character. Yet it wasn't his height that singled him out for show business. It was his feet.

For eleven years Mayhew, the London-born son of a policeman, had been working as an orderly at a hospital when he got a telephone call that was to change his life.

A newspaper journalist was calling about a search for the man with the largest feet in Britain. Peter, they thought, was a likely candidate. He agreed to try out, reached the list of finalists, but eventually failed to gain the dubious distinction. There were other Britishers with bigger feet. However, a producer happened to read the story and offered Mayhew the job of playing the Minotaur (a beast that's half bull, half man) in *Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger* in 1977.

Sensibly, he didn't feel that he had arrived, so he returned to hospital work. "It seemed so much more worthwhile," he explained.

But the movie business has the knack of reclaiming one, so it wasn't very long before Mayhew got another call from the studios. This time it came from George Lucas and Gary Kurtz, who were preparing *Star Wars*.

"What did they tell you about the character?" I asked, beginning our interview.

Peter Mayhew: They said he was furry and lovable but pretty fierce, too. They showed me sketches of the character. I sensed he had a heart of gold.

Alan Arnold: Do you feel you've given Chewie something of your own?

PM: His inquisitiveness and the way he walks.

AA: Do you have a feeling for animals?

PM: When I knew I had gotten the job I began to study animal reactions. I noticed the way cats and dogs sense trouble before it happens. You know, Chewie can't talk the human way but he's amazingly communicative.

AA: Did the success of *Star Wars* change things dramatically for you?

PM: Initially, the change was very dramatic. I was still living at home with my folks. After the picture's success, the press descended and that went on for weeks. Then I traveled in the U.S. and Canada, doing TV promotions.

AA: When you are yourself, not costumed as Chewie, do you have the urge to tell people who you are?

PM: Yes, but they don't believe me. They believe in Chewie.

But show business believed in Peter. He got other roles before being called to play Chewbacca again in *The Empire Strikes Back*.

AA: Does being so tall make life difficult?

PM: Yes, everything's more difficult—getting clothes, traveling, living in general. I have a special bed—it's seven feet, six inches long. When I go to restaurants I can never get my legs under a table. I bump my head in planes. People who sit behind me in the theater hate me. But I have given up apologizing to the world.

AA: Yet people have to look up to you. It has that advantage.

PM: True. And it's curious that when you look down at people you see their defects, their irregularities more clearly. I like my bird's-eye view. I think it's what gives Chewie his pride, his bigness. Bigness of heart.

And Peter Mayhew has that bigness, too—from his head to his mighty toes.

Thursday, May 17

I talked with Carrie today.

Alan Arnold: Tell me about the studies you've been doing at Sarah Lawrence College.

Carrie Fisher: I was taking a philosophy course, and piano and French, too. I'm still enrolled there, but I took a leave of absence when I had to do a television film. I plan to go back when I'm not working.

AA: It's important to you to keep studying, isn't it?

CF: Well, I need the education. I left high school after the tenth grade and became a chorus girl. I was in the chorus for a year. Then in 1974 I did *Shampoo*. After that I came to England for a year and a half to attend the Central School of Speech and Drama, but I'm not really educated in a lot of things that I'd like to know about.

AA: Doesn't growing up in show business educate you?

CF: Not exactly. You get cultured as opposed to educated.

AA: It's not bad to have the culture first and then overlay it with an education.

CF: I agree. But so far my only real education is in film. I'm a film buff. I used to watch films merely as a spectator. Now I know more about them and can see where they edit, where they pan. I know when a film is covered badly or when it's been badly directed or why they used certain angles. I sense why they use a high angle to establish a sense of loneliness in a lone figure or a low angle to establish something else. I have a good intuitive feel about the techniques of various directors. Gary knows about film; he's taught me a lot.

AA: Why do you think you're so interested in the technical aspects?

CF: It's just a very interesting field. Most people don't realize the amount of work that goes into making a film. There's so much in the editing and the writing. It's not all just a matter of close-up, master shot, long shot, extreme close-up. I see all the films I can possibly get to and the ones I like I see several times.

AA: You must have had easy access to the studios throughout your childhood.

CF: But I didn't go to them very much.

AA: Why not?

CF: Well, by the time I reached the age when I could have gone, my mother had pretty well stopped working in films. She was already performing in nightclubs. I don't have much recollection of going on the sets, hanging around dressing rooms, or anything like that.

AA: You must have met famous people at home.

CF: Yes, for a long time I thought of my mother as a movie star and not as a person. I remember thinking she only sang in movies. It shocked me one day when I heard her singing in the car. I had thought singing was something she did for others and for a living, not for me simply because she happened to be feeling good.

AA: A lot of people would think that growing up in Hollywood must be a very glamorous experience.

CF: We weren't exposed to the glamour all that much. When my parents were divorced, I was very young. Then my mother married someone who wasn't in show business. She still had a few friends who were in the business, but they weren't that special. Home wasn't a very social scene. I've got a lot of photos of me when I was very young at parties with celebrities, but I don't really remember the people or when the photos were taken.

AA: Some of them must have been taken with the old stars whose films you find so fascinating now.

CF: Well, Carroll Baker was my mother's friend and I think Gregory Peck and Glenn Ford were, too. I met Fred Astaire once and that was fun, and I met Bob Hope. Sometimes I would go with mother to rehearsals and to the Academy Awards. I'd meet stars there, but I don't have a very good memory of my childhood before the age of ten. After ten I met a lot of people because I was in the business, too.

AA: England seems to have played a major part in your life so far since you've studied and worked here for long periods. Has it influenced you?

CF: It has been very good for me. Originally, I wanted to go to school here. I auditioned for the

Royal Academy of Dramatic Art when I was sixteen, but I didn't get in though I got all the way to the final auditions. Then when I was seventeen I returned to England to do a show at the Palladium with my mother. I auditioned for the Academy again, but by then I'd been in *Shampoo*. I had an agent and my union card. I'd accomplished much of what drama school prepares you for. So I went to the Central School of Speech and Drama and took part of the course offered there. But I loved the years at the Central. For the first time I was around people my own age. In the beginning, it was hard because there was some resentment toward me since I came from a famous background.

AA: In your period of study at the Central did you see much theater?

CF: I saw everything, and sometimes several times. Seeing live theater was something I really hadn't had an opportunity to do before. It helped me when I did *Come Back, Little Sheba* for television, and gave me a better sense of how to develop and change a character.

AA: Did you live a student life here?

CF: Yes, and I loved it. It wasn't my *second* childhood, it was really my first. I was catching up with life, really enjoying what I needed to enjoy. I had a feeling of belonging to a family. In the group of thirty students there were only two other Americans. So, you see, I'm very Anglo-American oriented. With emphasis on the Anglo.

AA: Then you went back to California.

CF: During one of my vacations back home I auditioned for *Star Wars*. I got the part, so I didn't return to England for drama school but did come back to do *Star Wars*. After that I moved to New York.

AA: Is New York home for you now?

CF: It's a base.

AA: For what?

CF: Well, between films I can go back to my studies. It was after *Star Wars* that I went to Sarah Law-

rence, and then did *Come Back, Little Sheba*. When I go home to New York again, I plan to return for further studies at Sarah Lawrence.

Friday, May 18

Today I talked to Paul Hirsch who, with Marcia Lucas and Richard Chew, edited *Star Wars* and is editor on *The Empire Strikes Back*.

Alan Arnold: What is your background, Paul?

Paul Hirsch: I was born in New York City. My father is a painter and my mother a dancer, so I've been around the arts all my life. I was a music student in high school, and played drums. After that I went to Columbia University and studied art history. I'm not sure why I decided to go into movies; I think it was just a medium that excited me. At one point I visited an editing room and was fascinated by the editing tools and wanted to learn to use them. I shot a small film of my own, but when I started putting it together I realized that I didn't know enough. At that point, I decided I really had to learn about editing. I found I liked it and kept doing it.

AA: In New York?

PH: Yes, but I had finished college. My brother was working at Universal Studios at the time. He was also working on a program to develop young directing and writing talent in New York. He and Brian De Palma cowrote an anti-Johnson film called *Greetings* which became a small hit in the U.S. around 1968. My first work was editing trailers and it was on the strength of my trailer for *Greetings* that Brian hired me to work on the sequel to *Greetings* called *Hi, Mom!*, filmed in 1969. It starred Robert De Niro. I was 23 and it was the first feature film I ever cut. Since then Brian and I have done seven films together over a period of ten

years. We did *Sisters*, *Phantom of the Paradise*, *Obsession*, and *Carrie*. After that I worked on *Star Wars*. Following that I did *The Fury* with Brian and went on to do *King of the Gypsies* with Frank Pierson. Just before starting *The Empire Strikes Back* I worked with Brian on a film we did with students from a college in New York, a low-budget film called *Home Movies*, which is to be premiered at the 1979 Edinburgh Film Festival.

AA: To a layman the craft of editing is thought of as cutting, rearranging, getting to the essential meaning of something. How would you describe the craft of editing film?

PH: Editing is perhaps the only one of the film arts that has no historical antecedents. Other crafts involved in making a film have theatrical roots. Writing, stagecraft, acting, directing, set design, lighting, make-up all have their roots in the theater. Editing does not. Even cinematography, one could say, has roots in painting. Editing is the choice of the images, their succession and their duration. It's similar to other arts, but not really like any of them.

AA: An editor is most commonly thought of as an editor of words.

PH: Well, in a sense, editing a film is doing the final rewrite. It's the chance to change lines or replace them in a different sequence. An editor is also dealing with time, which is more a concern in the musical arts. Only film and music require that an audience comprehend the details of a work of art over a given period of time. You can read a novel in one sitting or you can take six months to read it. You can look at the edges or at the center of a painting; you're not compelled to experience it in any order. But in film and in music you're compelled to experience the work of art in a particular order and during a specific period of time. So its rhythm is a component of its structure in time.

Film editing has been compared to dance. Dance is the organization of body movements through space and time. Film editing is the organization of

all movements through space and time. As in dance, you are dealing with flow, rhythm, time, and elegance.

AA: Fashions in editing have changed through the years. To draw an analogy with the written word again, writing has become more economical than, say, in Dickens's time. Has something similar taken place in film?

PH: Editing has become much more specific. You ask a difficult question because some films done years ago are extremely sophisticated from an editorial standpoint, while others were crudely edited. But among even the crude films are ones that you remember. The Marx Brothers' pictures are so funny, but nothing matches. Their films are just a lot of jokes crammed together without concern for any kind of smoothness or flow. On the other hand, certain techniques once considered avant-garde have become standard in the vocabulary of cinema. In some of Hitchcock's films it's surprising to see long, slow fade-outs at the close of scenes and long, slow fade-ins to begin new scenes. Today you'd never use a fade, you'd simply cut to the next scene. Audiences today accept scene transitions that are relatively abrupt compared to the old way of doing things. These quick transitions generate a much more highly charged pace.

AA: How can one distinguish the director's touch from the editor's touch in a sequence?

PH: I don't think that's important. I think it's easy to discern when a scene has been successfully realized in the editing stage. I don't think it's important to discover who was in control of the editing.

AA: Even so, the public doesn't always realize the close relationship between the director and the editor.

PH: An editor who is in great demand and highly paid wouldn't be someone merely taking orders—he would be someone who could impart something of himself to the work. Editing is popularly con-

sidered to be the director's job, and the editor is considered to be simply the director's tool. But that's far from the truth. The director wants an editor who will take the film he has shot and put it together in a way that achieves to the utmost degree the quality he was striving for when he was shooting. If it's a funny scene, he wants the pieces put together so that it's as funny as possible. If it's a scary one, he wants his editor to make it as scary as possible. That's an interpretative thing, so different editors will interpret the film in different ways.

AA: Why do you think George Lucas chose you for *Star Wars*?

PH: George had seen *Phantom of the Paradise*, which I had cut. It had editorial style, and he liked it. Shortly after Fox had bought *Phantom of the Paradise*, I met George and his wife at a cocktail party in Los Angeles and talked with them for about three minutes. Subsequently, George and Brian De Palma were casting in Los Angeles—Brian for *Carrie* and George for *Star Wars*—and both were looking for actors and actresses of roughly the same age. So to save time they had a combined casting session. It was during that session that I happened to call Brian and he said, "George wants to speak to you," and put him on the phone. George said he'd like to work with me someday, but added that he had already hired an editor for *Star Wars*. So Brian and I did *Carrie*, during which time George started shooting *Star Wars* in England. In mid-September Marcia Lucas called me to say they weren't going to make their deadline at the rate the editing was going and asked if I would come and work on *Star Wars*. I finished editing *Carrie* in Los Angeles on a Friday in October; the next day I flew to San Francisco and started working on *Star Wars*. Then the three of us [Richard Chew, Marcia Lucas, and Hirsch] worked through October to December. At the end of December, Marcia left to work on *New York, New York*. George felt that

it would be more efficient to finish the picture with one editor, and chose me.

AA: Did the editing assignment on *Star Wars* call for specialized knowledge because it was a space fantasy?

PH: When George first took me around Industrial Light and Magic, showed me the model room, the computerized camera for shooting the miniatures and glass paintings, my head started to spin. I said, "Look, George, I don't want you to get this wrong, but I've never worked on anything this complicated before." His reply was, "That's all right. Nobody has." I felt much better. But the technical achievements used in creating *Star Wars* didn't really affect the editing all that much, except that sometimes we didn't have a shot till the last moment so we had to use our imaginations as to what was going to be fitted in. The immense technical effort involved in creating a special-effects shot doesn't really affect how you use it. You're still trying to make the characters believable and the story logical. The art is to make things clear without hitting an audience over the head with it. Special-effects shots are very expensive. To extend a shot by two or three frames is an enormous expense. There were times when we would have liked a shot to be longer. We used every usable frame available.

AA: Did you find the public reaction a surprise?

PH: I didn't expect it to go through the roof. The May preview in San Francisco was the first time we showed it to a public audience. The answer print was only partially complete, so where we didn't have a negative for a particular shot, we took it out of the work print and cut it into the answer print. We had mixed nine reels of the film, but three were only a temporary mix which our sound editor had done. The idea was to test the film and make any necessary changes. George and I had been over the picture time and time again—in minute detail because George is a perfectionist—and I felt there was no room for improvement. I couldn't imagine

what we could do to make it better. But George had arranged for Marcia to have a week off from *New York, New York* to come and help recut the picture. My heart sank. I thought it was already great. Anyway, the audience went crazy. I have never seen anything like it in my whole life. *Carrie* has a scene at the end that makes everyone jump in fear, but in *Star Wars* the cut to hyperspace makes audiences jump for joy. The physical reaction to the film, the vocal response was very exciting. As we left the screening, I asked George what he thought. "Well, I guess we won't have to change anything after all," he said. And we didn't.

AA: Is *Empire* more technical than *Star Wars*?

PH: Reading the script, I would say that the design of the film is every bit as ambitious as the first one. Nothing has been discarded because accomplishing it would be too difficult. There are scenes that boggle the mind when I read them because I wonder how they'll be technically achieved. People will see things they've never seen, worlds they haven't visited, unimaginable worlds. *Empire* will have a more polished look than the first film, and the shooting style will be quite different.

AA: Is this a reflection of Irvin Kershner's shooting style?

PH: Yes, he's moving the camera quite a lot. In *Star Wars* the camera hardly ever moved, therefore much of the film's energy was generated from the editing. In this film there are more camera movements and energy is generated without the need for such rapid cutting.

AA: How do you keep in contact with the work going on in California?

PH: I'll be working in San Francisco when we've finished shooting here. Meanwhile, we're in communication with the ILM people in San Francisco via videotape cassette. We send them copies of scenes that have been shot so they can coordinate the design of the miniatures.

Monday, May 21

Talking to Billy Dee Williams:

Alan Arnold: Billy, you were born in New York City, weren't you?

Billy Dee Williams: Yes, I spent most of my early years in Harlem and had an interesting childhood. My mother aspired to be an opera singer, my uncle was a not very successful musician, and my twin sister and I started painting at an early age. I won scholarships and awards for painting at eighteen, but I had started working in show business when I was only seven. My mother was working as an elevator operator at the Lyceum Theatre in New York City and knew that Kurt Weill was looking for a cute little boy for a walk-on part in a musical. That was my first experience in the theater, but the bug bit me.

AA: It wasn't the rough, tough upbringing one associates with Harlem. You had a cultured upbringing.

BDW: It was both cultured and tough. Tough in the sense that I was brought up around a lot of tough people. I had to fight to survive like a lot of other people. But I had the cultural thing, too, a love of the arts on the part of both my parents. My father loved music, although he wasn't well educated. He worked at menial jobs all his life, but he was a good man, a hard-working man and a good father. He encouraged both my sister and me in whatever we wanted to do.

AA: So at seven the show-business bug got you.

BDW: I did the Kurt Weill musical on Broadway with Lotte Lenya. It was a resounding flop, due partly to the fact that it was done in 1946, just after the war, and there was strong anti-German feeling at that time.

AA: At seven you could hardly have begun going to school. Did you get any formal education?

BDW: Later on I went to high school. Then I got a small part in a play. The producer told me I had talent and advised me to study acting. But I was beginning to paint. In fact, I got a scholarship to the National Academy of Fine Arts and Design in New York City and studied painting there for two years. But I was very short of money and did work as an extra on television to earn some. One thing led to another and I found myself involved more in show business than in the art world.

AA: How did it develop from there?

BDW: Well, a friend suggested I get an agent, and so I did. My agent got me small parts on Broadway and eventually a part as a young hoodlum in the movie *The Last Angry Man* with Paul Muni. Then I did a play for Robert Rossen, one of the two plays he directed on Broadway. It was called *The Cool World*. After that I did the Broadway production of *A Taste of Honey*, which Tony Richardson directed.

AA: Well, you were young and successful in New York.

BDW: Yes, I was doing well in New York City, for a black actor. I was working more than most black actors at the time and was voted "one of the most promising young men in Manhattan" by *Holiday* magazine. But I had difficult times, too, and fell on a very bad patch.

AA: Why do you think that happened?

BDW: It was a combination of things, but mainly it was because I became conscious of belonging to a minority. I'd had things pretty good until then. Suddenly, it became hard and I was looking around for roots. But the culture around me was based on European western culture, and if you're really not a part of that, you feel uneasy. You sense you don't fit into it. For me, it was a passing phase. I guess it was not a good time for black actors.

AA: Do you think that success very early in your

youth had caused you to go a little too fast, that you hadn't grown in other ways?

BDW: There's always that possibility. But I'm not just speaking about myself. Others like me were feeling the same way during the early sixties. Of course, it also had something to do with being an actor. Acting is a curious way of living. One's life is sporadic. You work and then you don't work. If you're a minority actor it's even more difficult. The roles are just not there.

AA: How did this fallow period that you entered affect you?

BDW: I think that when you're young and impressionable and don't understand the world, you don't know what's being thrown at you, so you react in a very negative way. That was suddenly happening to me. I was building up hostility to people and things. I don't like that feeling. I wasn't brought up that way. I discovered through a study of Eastern philosophy that hostility destroys you.

AA: Is that how you began to extricate yourself?

BDW: Well, I sort of retreated, locked myself away for a year in a room in New York on East Ninth Street. It was like going into the desert. After about a year I emerged and said, "Well, now I can deal with my surroundings." I was able to walk into any situation and see beauty in it.

AA: Was this new stability reflected in your work?

BDW: Absolutely. My work became better. I began to see differently, to understand things. I began to look at life as a whole rather than just a series of fragments.

AA: Then the opportunities came again.

BDW: Opportunities came, but when they didn't, I didn't panic. That was the most important thing.

AA: What opportunities came?

BDW: I was in Jean Genet's *The Blacks* in New York City. Other little things, too. Then I did a musical on Broadway—*Hallelujah Baby!*—which was successful. I was in it for seven months.

In 1968 I decided to leave America for a short

time. I wanted to experience something other than the American culture. I was tired of the question of race. I wanted to find out what others were feeling. So I went to England where it rained every day. After five days of that, I went on to Paris and spent about a month there. Then I returned to the U.S., left New York, and went to California. By this time I had a son I was putting through private school.

AA: When did you marry?

BDW: I've been married three times. My first marriage was in 1961. It didn't last long, but I was always a devoted father to my son. I wanted him to be exposed to the best, which was why I sent him to private school. I was married again around 1969 and that only lasted a year. She was an actress. I couldn't deal with that! Then I married my present wife, who is Japanese, and we have a five-year-old daughter.

AA: So you were on your way to California.

BDW: I was back and forth between California and New York and had an apartment on both coasts. In New York I did a play called *Slow Dance on the Killing Ground*, which was interesting. Then I worked in Canada for five years doing television plays. After that I decided to spend more time in California where opportunities in television were better. But first I did another play, *Ceremonies in Dark Old Men*, in New York. There were a couple of TV producers in California who really liked my work and would always send for me. So I found myself going out to the West Coast a lot. Then *Brian's Song* was made, which was the turning point and I was nominated for an Emmy Award. James Caan costarred, and the story was about two football players, one dying of cancer, the other (my part) his very good friend. After that I was hired to play opposite Diana Ross in *Lady Sings the Blues* and *Mahogany*.

AA: A recent stage success for you was as Martin Luther King in *I Have a Dream*. Tell me about that.

BDW: We did that play for three months on the road, starting in Washington, D.C., at Ford's Theatre. Then we took it to Chicago, Atlanta, Philadelphia, and finally Broadway.

AA: It must have been an emotionally exhausting role.

BDW: Yes, and I had some very strange experiences with it. It got really into me. I had to be onstage for two hours in what was almost a solo performance.

AA: The President came to see you, didn't he?

BDW: President Carter came to a benefit performance at Ford's Theatre and led the standing ovation.

AA: Did you get any awards?

BDW: No, I missed an award because after some time with the play in New York, I left. I couldn't do it any longer. It was getting too close to me. I just wanted to go back home and be with my family. Otherwise, I think I would have received awards.

AA: When were you approached about the role of Lando Calrissian?

BDW: After *Lady Sings the Blues* I really didn't know what direction to take. I had become a sort of romantic leading man which I was not entirely happy about because I love doing character roles. Then my agent called and asked if I was interested in a part in *The Empire Strikes Back*. I had some reservations about the role because I was afraid it was just another romantic figure.

AA: How do you see the role now?

BDW: Well, Lando's a scoundrel and a hero, which is interesting. He's a survivor, too. You think at first he's a bad guy, all bad, but he ends up not being such a bad guy. That transition makes the role a challenge.

AA: In space fantasy are you able to develop a character in recognizable human terms?

BDW: Oh, yes, I think so. Lando has great charm.

AA: It's a very physical role, isn't it? Are you fit?

BDW: I work out every day. I'm a health nut and

take vitamins regularly. I slip now and then, but I am a great believer that the body is your temple. It houses your spiritual self, so if you take care of the body, you are automatically taking care of the rest of your personality.

AA: I wrote of you as "the distinguished black actor." I meant it as a distinction, but it obviously jarred.

BDW: My whole approach is that an actor is an actor. I'm bored with the race problem. My hope is to be recognized internationally as a leading actor. I don't like to be told what I am. The marvelous thing about being a painter is that it teaches you the subtleties, the textures, and the tones that make up and express life. It bothers me to be part of a limiting concept of being black. What is this phenomenon of color prejudice? What does it mean? How did it start? How does it govern a life? I think knowing those things will give me greater flexibility. A person has to be able to stand outside himself and see exactly what he is. Periods alone help me do that. I'm not a loner in a reclusive sense. I'm a family man. But I think everybody who respects the needs of the human spirit has to be alone sometimes.

Tuesday, May 22

The *Star Wars* stage began its movie life today. The set that has been built on it depicts the huge ice hangar on Hoth. On this set are arranged the Rebel fleet of snowspeeders and the huge, full-scale *Falcon*. All the principals and hundreds of extras were on call today, and the two film units combined to work simultaneously.

"Completing the soundstage is the culmination of seven months of planning, building, and set prepara-

tion," said Kurtz. "And the result will be a permanent facility for filmmakers in England."

True, but nobody came to the opening. There had been talk of a press reception. Fox suggested asking Prince Charles. We thought of having R2-D2 open the mighty scenery doors by remote control. But nothing came of these suggestions. It was thought more prudent to get on with the work, bearing in mind we are behind schedule.

But there was a visitor nonetheless—eighteen-year-old Matthew Pack from Chester, Virginia, who had won a *Star Wars* Fan Club competition. His prize of a trip to London coincided with the stage's opening day and he was overjoyed.

Kersh was impressed, too. This stage is the largest interior he has ever worked on. "Of course, I've worked on bigger sets built on location, but this is by far the biggest interior," he told me. "You might say that it's reversing the trend in recent years of filmmakers going on location to achieve bigness. But outer space is colossal and where can you go to film that? You have to build to show the bigness in space and that's what we have done."

But it's a pity, I feel, that we didn't open the stage with a fanfare. A movie stage, like a theater, is consecrated to make-believe. Who knows what shadow worlds will have brief lives on it over the years to come? Palaces and spacecraft, streets where no one lives, ships that sail no oceans, and jungles where birds don't fly—all may have their day in this cavern of entertainment. But nobody except that boy from Virginia will remember the thrill of the first day.

Wednesday, May 23

Special-effects men, so enterprising in other ways, share one defect with government officials—they find it difficult to communicate in simple English. Tech-

nicians they may be, but this hardly excuses, I feel, their inability to explain to the layman what they do.

Science in general has this handicap. It is secretive in a world where ultimate power is in the hands of people we cannot fathom. So I was determined to get Brian Johnson to talk in simple terms about his contribution to the film, especially as I had been unable to understand much of John Dykstra's account of the special-effects techniques in *Star Wars* published in *American Cinematographer* (July 1977).

Here is a sample of that article: "The matte elements are usually used in pairs. The holdout matte is a black image of the subject to be matted in on that particular frame. This black image is surrounded by clear cell. This holdout matte is used to keep the light used to expose the final composite negative from printing any information in the area that the subject of this holdout matte will occupy in the final composite. The other element of the pair is called the window matte. This matte is used to keep the material which is in the frame with the subject of the matte from printing. In our system this matte is usually a composite of the blue screen matte with its edge gradation and the garbage matte generated in rotoscope. . . ."

Garbage matte and rotoscope? What kind of language is this? Was Oppenheimer the last scientist to talk plain English? Where is the spirit of da Vinci? It was, perhaps, optimistic of me to believe that I could talk to Johnson and receive insights of value to us all. Yet he was patient and I found him stimulating.

Alan Arnold: How does one become a special-effects expert?

Brian Johnson: Most people in the industry begin when they're very young, find a department that holds particular interest for them, and work their way up. I started in the camera department of a film company. At first my job was to sweep the floor. Then I loaded magazines for cameramen, gradually progressed and became a camera assistant. After working at those levels I chose a particular branch of the department: special effects, which covered

trick camera work, matte shots, opticals, the whole spectrum of effects.

AA: What is meant by opticals? To a nontechnical mind, optics concern the sense of sight and the eyes.

BJ: Opticals in the film sense are used when you can't produce the required effect simply by pointing a camera at something and taking a picture. It's the combining of various elements to produce a believable shot not possible any other way.

AA: The cinema is ahead of any other medium in terms of this specialization, isn't it?

BJ: Yes, because film is more easily manipulated than videotape. We can pick up a piece of film, look at it, and decide to superimpose that piece on another. Unlike tape, a frame of film can be picked out and overlaid on another very easily. You can add many different components and have as a result a good-looking, artistically correct shot. But with electronic materials like tape, you can usually tell when optical effects have been added. There are observable fringe lines. Ultimately, that will improve with the use of microprocessors. As things advance more rapidly, the electronic side of the business is going to become more and more important.

AA: And more and more technical to the layman. In the early sixties you made considerable impact with the special effects for *The Day the Earth Caught Fire*. Was that your breakthrough?

BJ: It was a great success as a special-effects film. I was part of the team headed by Les Bowie, a great effects man.

AA: After that?

BJ: After directing some small movies for Gerry Anderson, I worked on *2001* as part of a very large crew. There's no way I could take credit for the effects on *2001*. No one person could.

AA: Then came a television series which is much respected for its effects.

BJ: "Space: 1999." I think I made a bit of a breakthrough there. Up to that time most television series hadn't had very good special effects, no science-

fiction series anyway. TV tended to use stock shots. For "1999" we used realistic models. We tried to do everything in the camera rather than rely on opticals. We did have some opticals, but by keeping those to a minimum we could view our rushes every morning. It was important to know each day if our work looked right because we were averaging between five and six shots a day, a fairly high average.

AA: And your latest film is *Alien*, isn't it?

BJ: Right. Very much an effects movie. And there are other big films coming on the market now with high special-effects content. If every successive production is going to try to outdo its predecessor's effects, films are going to cost a fortune. On *The Empire Strikes Back* we're trying to streamline the process.

AA: How?

BJ: We are experimenting with something called a digital film printer. This printer transfers elements onto a very high-definition cathode-ray tube, combining these elements in a computer, and rephotographing the final result on film. We gain because the definition we achieve by using the digital film printer is better than the grain structure of color film. Therefore, we shouldn't have any muffs when we make our generations of intermediates.

AA: You're sounding a bit technical again.

BJ: I'll try to explain. Every time there is a new optical generation quality is lost; the grain structure becomes apparent and there is an increase in contrast. When we use division format we have a bigger negative area. When it's finally reduced to the anamorphic format, it's done much better on a digital film printer. That way there is no loss of definition.

AA: But I'm losing *you* again. Can't you be less technical?

BJ: No, I don't think I can. You see, every addition of an element means a loss of quality. If you want to photograph a model, you have to make a three-dimensional model and move it for realism. With a

digital film printer connected to a computer, it's possible to produce on a flat television screen a very, very close likeness to a three-dimensional model—just by calling up a digital sequence of numbers. Thus we can produce a picture and take it to the drawing board. Then we start again with a clean sheet of paper, make three new drawings, and instruct the computer to build the model. The model will be put together electronically in the computer; it will never *actually* be built.

AA: All this simply confirms to me that it's illusion of the most sophisticated kind. I can't understand it, but the concept fills me with wonder.

BJ: Well, that's how things are going. We are actually able to program a computer to "dirty down" an electronic image. We start with a clean model and then program the computer to make it look well worn and used. Thus the image becomes more life-like, a spacecraft with scuff-marks and oil-streaks. The examples I've seen of this process are just thrilling. It's coming along fast, this kind of technology. For *The Empire Strikes Back* we are using the computer more to combine all our optical sides than to produce the electronic model images. However, we hope to include one or two electronic model image shots.

AA: Talking about illusion, is it possible now to get a three-dimensional effect on a flat screen without a human viewer?

BJ: As of now the only way you can get a three-dimensional effect without an appliance is to instruct the human brain. You would have to tell the brain to view one side of one half of the picture and a section of the other, and let the brain sort it out. It is your brain that gives you the three-dimensional image. But, who knows? There are lots of exciting things coming up. Laser devices can already scan pictures to give two images on one screen. All sorts of exciting new things are in development.

AA: When an audience exclaims, "It's impossible but

it's being done," you'll have achieved the ultimate, I think.

BJ: Yes, it's convincing an audience to believe that what they're seeing is real.

AA: What is the relationship between special effects and stunts?

BJ: We work very closely with stunt coordinators. If we're doing special effects with actors and stuntmen, we have to be careful not to injure anybody. We have a feeling of close kinship toward stuntmen and try to build a mutual confidence with them. If a stuntman is nervous about an effect, it's not going to work. If a stuntman has a feeling of panic, it spreads, and we may panic about him. Basically, floor effects using stuntmen are based on common sense, the ability to turn to the director and say "That's possible" or "You can't do that." But with live-action shooting there is always pressure. They want to hurry it. You have to be able to say, "That is going to take this amount of time. It can't be done any quicker." Special-effects crews have to be given the time to make sure everything is absolutely correct so that when they shoot they get the take first time. Restaging the effect because time wasn't given to perfecting it in the first place is the cause of many unnecessary delays.

AA: Have there been times when you've said, "No, this just cannot be done"?

BJ: No. Everything is possible. It's usually a question of money. One may have to tell a producer that "Plan A is going to cost a hundred thousand; plan B is going to cost fifty thousand. You can choose either a really large model and a lot of cameras or a smaller model with fewer cameras. The effect will be similar but it won't be as stunning. Is it worth the extra cost in terms of production value?"

AA: By spending twice the money do you gain twice the effect?

BJ: Not necessarily, but top effects cost top money. Ingenuity can produce excellent effects for less.

AA: What does your effects department at the studios in England comprise?

BJ: An electronics section which operates in conjunction with the art department and the props department. We also have a unit making the radio-controlled R2 units and other types of robots. Also, our department has a floor-effects unit and a lab equipped with welding equipment, milling tools, lathes, and so on. We do the engineering effects work for the picture, such as the rig for the X-wing which descends through fog to crash and sink on the bog planet. We make the laser guns which are gas gun cylinders a cubic foot in capacity. We charge these perforated cylinders with a high-voltage spark, flood the chamber with a mixture of acetylene and oxygen, and get a tremendously bright flash.

AA: Do you see a time when we will be able to walk around an image telling us a story? A hologram?

BJ: I think that time will come. Looking at a Japanese electronics magazine the other day, I saw a picture of a flat tubeless television a quarter of an inch thick. Five years ago I read that it was going to take a long time to develop a flat television tube incorporating the screen. Well, in five years it's been developed. Now they're developing a flat color television tube. Tomorrow is always just around the corner, they used to say. Nowadays, we merge into tomorrow imperceptibly.

AA: With so great an emphasis on special effects, isn't there the danger of diminishing the story element in this film?

BJ: I couldn't agree more. We must always be vigilant about that.

AA: Are you working closely with those in California?

BJ: Yes. I've already been to California four or five times in connection with the picture and will go there again soon. There, we have a team of about forty-five technicians.

AA: Can technology on this scale only come from California?

BJ: The electronics side is very much the product of California. As things stand at present we don't have in England anything like the facilities, the technicians, the real electronic specialists found there.

AA: In creating this space fantasy, do you draw upon material from actual space research and therefore reflect what space people are doing?

BJ: In a way we preempt things they would like to do and can't. We have tremendous rapport with NASA. Many NASA people are very interested in science-fiction movies. For one thing the best sf films upgrade NASA's image. Two years ago I was trying to promote a production at the Cannes Festival to be based on Dan Dare, the English comic-strip character. A man from NASA assisted me by thinking up some amazing concepts: huge tubular colonies rotating in gravity welds in space, areas of nil gravity between planetary bodies. He was fascinated by our designs for spacecraft.

AA: So fiction is still ahead of fact.

BJ: Yes. *Empire*, like *Star Wars*, is a pioneering project. We have a team of people in England and in California who work very well together. We've got the best of both worlds: a brilliant crew in California to do the model work and a really good floor-effects crew in England. Everybody has to work together in harmony and that makes the whole business much more fun.

Tuesday, May 29

By even movie-director standards, Irvin Kershner is a man from whom words flow easily on the subject of his work and philosophy. Each time we've talked on tape (the questions unscripted, never put to him

in advance), I've been impressed by his eloquence and loquacity. It's intelligent, interesting, convincing talk. But there have been times when I've wondered if he wasn't treating me simply, though graciously, to an exercise in an art of which he is a master—the art of being interviewed. With this in mind I was determined today to try to pierce the fabric with some pretty tricky questions.

Alan Arnold: You're not directing stars but famous characters. Do you feel sometimes like a puppeteer?

Irvin Kershner: You're implying there's no real interpretation, nothing between me and the puppet and that's not true. There's a tremendous amount.

AA: But because of the kind of movie *Empire* is, I think Mark, Harrison, and Carrie are puppets to a larger degree than performers you've directed before.

IK: They're not. Put different actors into the roles, do the scene ten different times, and you'll get different reactions, a different quality.

AA: You must have directed pictures in which the authority of the actors or actresses overrode your own. It doesn't seem to me that there's any opposition here. You're not faced with a star situation.

IK: No opposition at all.

AA: Then you *are* the manipulator.

IK: I set the scene according to what I know the actors can do and should do. I'm using their temperament, their quality, when I stage a scene. To make them work against their temperament would create conflict.

AA: Are you saying you're not putting your stamp of authority on the picture?

IK: I'm reacting to the actors and their temperaments all the time. The greatest conflict in directing comes when you try to stretch an actor. Sometimes that stretching is good, sometimes it isn't. It's hopeless to try to force an actor to work outside his particular temperament. It doesn't work in film. The business of ultimate authority is a very difficult one. You can't remake a person's temperament. But

given an actor's personality, it is possible to deal with a considerable range of interpretation. There is tremendous feedback between an actor and a director.

AA: Can an actor have an overall vision of a picture in the making?

IK: Well, only the director can have that. He's been poring over the complete canvas for a very long time. Actors like Harrison, Mark, and Carrie can only have a vision of their own roles, their own piece of the canvas.

AA: Can you truly say you believe in *The Empire Strikes Back* in the way you must have believed in *Loving*, *A Fine Madness*, or *The Eyes of Laura Mars*?

IK: I didn't believe in *The Eyes of Laura Mars*. I believed in the idea I began with, but I did not believe in what was imposed on me during its production. Who you work with determines to a great extent how well you use your talent and skill. I feel wonderful making *this* film, even as a socially conscious director, as you've referred to me. I'm interested in humanity, and drama to me is humanity. This film deals with humanity, believe it or not. It deals with archetypal situations and characters in which good and evil are clearly defined. It deals with making difficult decisions, decisions which have to do with patriotism, with friendship, with value judgments. It will speak to kids very strongly, though I don't think they'll consciously know what it's saying because it has so strong an element of fantasy. In *Empire* we're dealing with legend, myth, and magic—forces that are ineffable and indefinable. There's more to this story than meets the eye. There's more to life, to energy, to matter than we realize. In this film we talk of galaxies, not mere worlds. I feel good dealing with fantasy. I can get outside myself.

AA: Isn't there an element in all this of you saying, "I'll get this bestseller done and then do the things I really want to do"?

IK: That's not the case. It's not the case at all. I no longer think that way and I haven't thought that way for quite a while. That to me is the deadliest form of compromise. Do you think I would give two years of my life so that I can do something else later? No! I wouldn't give two years to anything or anyone but myself. I am enjoying myself now. I'm trying to grow from the experience. My rewards are now. If there are rewards later, monetary or otherwise, I'll be thankful and pleased, but the true reward is now. You can't take away experience. You *can* take away money. Success for our film will be in the enjoyment it gives—that's what George and Gary and I and all of us are working for. The rest is mere economics.

Wednesday, May 30

Variety's front-page headline read "EMPIRE" GUARANTEES \$26 MIL PLUS. Translated, the message is that the movie being made here will be in profit before it is ever shown. A Fox vice-president in Los Angeles issued a statement that the film's distributors have received guarantees from American exhibitors, anxious to book the picture for showing next year, totaling more than \$26 million.

Undoubtedly, it is true; the built-in box-office appeal of the successor to *Star Wars* is of unprecedented value, but to rattle money now, with the picture half-complete and a year ahead of its scheduled premiere, isn't in character with Lucas, Kurtz, and company. Nobody can be sure that *The Empire Strikes Back* will do *Star Wars* business. Here at the studios there is no complacency. The new picture is costing much more to make; its launch costs will be higher. Many millions of dollars can be spent launching a picture, including the cost of network television advertising. A 70mm print costs \$15,000, and hundreds of prints

will be made. A movie has to bring in far, far more than its overall cost to be counted financially successful.

So, in a sense, the *Variety* story has no bearing on the question of whether or not *Empire* will continue the *Star Wars* success story. Certainly, people will go to see it just because it *is* the successor, but it has to live up to the legend of the first if it is to maintain its following. That is something very much on the minds of the people making the picture. "We're trying to make the best picture we can," George Lucas told me. What else can he say? Leave the shouting to *Variety*.

Thursday, May 31

Dave Prowse is a man who has broken out of a mask and he's proud of his achievement as his interview indicates.

Dave Prowse: When *Star Wars* opened I thought I had the raw end of the deal. It seemed to me there was a concentrated effort to preserve Darth Vader's anonymity at my expense. Yet I had played him and he had become a cult figure. I was determined to get the credit for it.

Alan Arnold: How did you go about it?

DP: I took on two press agents—one in England and another in the States—prepared a brochure about myself, and answered all my own fan mail.

AA: Did it work?

DP: Amazingly well. I've never stopped being asked to make appearances, to open stores, to attend science-fiction meetings. I've been on several publicity tours in the States.

AA: Unmasked?

DP: Yes, without a mask.

AA: Did you ever worry that the *Star Wars* people might disapprove or get someone else to play Vader in the new picture?

DP: I didn't think they would change a winning team.

AA: What exactly is Vader's appeal?

DP: He towers above all the other characters. When George Lucas asked me why I wanted to play the villain, I said, "Because he'll be remembered."

Dave Prowse was born in Bristol and in his teens developed an interest in body-building. During the 1960s he became a weight-lifting champion and expected to be invited to the Tokyo Olympics. When that didn't happen he decided to exploit himself as an athlete. He sold sports equipment and ran two fitness magazines, *Power* and *Fitness and Health*. When they failed he opened his own gymnasium. This led to his being asked to run the sports department of Harrods, the famous London department store, and from there he has sold equipment to many an overweight figure of distinction from Edward Heath to various crown princes of Arabia. Now he has collected his interests in a book called *Fitness Is Fun*.

"Is Darth Vader a fit man?" I asked him.

"Put it like this—he's single-minded," said Dave. "You've got to be strong to be evil. In any case, the devil looks after him."

Monday, June 4

Let me tell you a secret: Anthony Daniels loves C-3PO . . . and if that sounds like graffiti it's nevertheless true.

The thirty-four-year-old actor who plays the human-shaped, distinctly neurotic robot that stole whole scenes in *Star Wars* is head over heels in love with that character, and is playing him again in *The Empire Strikes Back*. He is sensitive to the point of possessiveness about him. Which is why Tony has from time to time felt resentful toward the makers of the *Star Wars* pictures who, he feels, would like the world to believe

that Threepio is nothing more than microcircuitry. They are content, it seems to him, to have made Threepio a star, and have not gone out of their way to make one of Anthony Daniels.

An honest man, he makes no bones about it; "I can understand their motivation, but I put everything into the character at a time when my theater career was progressing well. Yet when *Star Wars* was such a hit the filmmakers seemed to want to deny that I existed. 'C-3PO is entirely mechanical,' the publicists for the distributors once actually claimed, and that hurt." And it was a burgeoning sense of letdown that prompted Tony to say to George Lucas on one occasion: "You opened a door for me, but you didn't tell me that beyond it was another door that you'd slam in my face!"

Harsh words. But they're in the past now. Tony is playing Threepio again, and when I last saw George Lucas talking to him on the set, no ripple of resentment seemed to cloud their relationship. The mind of the toymaker and the mind inside the toy were as one.

"I am fond of George," Tony told me when we talked today. "He's such a likable person—and vulnerable—that you don't want to add to his problems, although he's far more relaxed on this picture with Kersh directing than he was on *Star Wars*. I think he found that a strain. You see, so few people aside from Gary really believed in it."

"Did you believe in it?"

"I can't say I understood the story entirely. A lot of it was still in George's mind. But I understood Threepio. I felt that he was the one character that combined integrity, intelligence, and kindness. I know it's a strange thing to say about a robot, but I felt that he had humanity, that he was a gentleman. What appealed to me was his truthfulness, his lack of guile. I was very excited at the prospect of playing him."

In the spring of 1976, Tony was performing with the Young Vic Company in London as Guildenstern in Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, a curious, moving tragicomedy built around

two of the minor characters from *Hamlet*. The role is a two-hour tour de force. Tony felt that to be performing in this West End revival, after the play had already toured in Europe and Mexico, represented a distinct achievement in the field he most loves: legitimate theater. With this sense of status he was able to tell his agent truthfully that he had no interest whatsoever in playing a robot in a space fantasy.

That was before he met George Lucas at an interview at Twentieth Century-Fox's London offices. Tony was more curious than eager because his agent had warned that it would not be a high-priced offer, even if he were selected, because "the money is being spent on the sets."

On arriving at Fox, Tony found a rather bemused-looking Lucas seated in an office. Kurtz was in a corner making notes. "I didn't really know what to say or do," Tony recalled to me. "Some candidates for the robot role were doing the most peculiar impressions of automatons and when George said to them 'Thank you very much,' one of them couldn't stop. He just went on twitching, winding down like a spent toy. It was weird, embarrassing, and I just stood there feeling strange."

Then Tony noticed that on the walls of the room were illustrations from the proposed fantasy. One was of a lonely, infinite moonscape that made a manlike robot roaming its inhospitable terrain seem even more vulnerable. The little figure seemed to Tony to have "the terrible plaintiveness of a clown." In this Ralph McQuarrie illustration was Tony's first sight of Three-pio.

"I was entranced," he admits. "Then, all of a sudden, George noticed my interest and became very animated. He got up and began talking to me about the illustrations. It was then I realized that this man interviewing actors was really far more interested in these paintings, in the look and mechanics of the thing. Thinking back, it was then I should have stepped aside, but I didn't. Instead, I found myself sharing his enthusiasm because it was infectious. We discussed

how the robot would walk, its personality and behavior. I never actually auditioned, but I left praying I would get the role. It was a meeting of minds. All rather bizarre, when I reflect on it."

It was to become more so. Once Tony got the part, he was informed that an entire body cast would have to be made of him before the robot's metallic-looking encasement could be designed. Achieving this was to subject the young actor to processes that left him feeling he had no dignity at all.

Summoned to the studio, he was stripped and then asked if he had shaved himself. "Not all over," he replied. "Then we shall have to be extra careful," a studio plasterer observed. The plaster crew proceeded to smother his torso with Vaseline, cover his privates with plastic film, and encase him in a plaster mold. To add to Tony's feeling that he was a laboratory specimen, the movie men grouped around him saying things like "How shall we make his elbow move?" and "Let's put a cog in there," but in time he gave up worrying, lay back on a recliner, hid his shame in a book, and let the workers probe.

Still more indignities were in store for Tony. During the research leading up to the making of the robot's suit, various types of material, mainly plastics, were tried. To his alarm, the technicians talked of the melting points of certain substances. Were boiling oils to be poured over him, he wondered? Then they made a suit of latex in which Tony spent several hours before going on to the theater. During the evening he realized that the latex had started up a skin allergy. Throughout that performance of the Stoppard play the itch was so appalling that the audience must have thought Guildenstern was on fire.

The filmmakers were worried, too, that the suit might generate temperatures so extreme that Tony would be asphyxiated, especially in the heat of the Tunisian location. So an attempt was made to air-condition it by fitting him with an undersuit in which cold water would circulate through capillary tubes. "They ob-

vously wanted to take care of me," Tony reflects, rather ruefully.

The movie was made, and its success is now well known. But it was after the film's release that Tony's anxieties were really to begin. Not a single new offer came. "I was out of work for ten weeks," he told me, "and I began to wonder what I had done."

What he had done was to make one of George Lucas's most engaging creations his own, but in the process the Manchester-born actor's own personality had virtually disappeared. Many reviews raved over Threepio without giving Tony's name. He would watch himself in television extracts that gave him no mention. During promotional appearances the public wanted Threepio and felt cheated when they got Daniels. More serious was the reaction of the profession. When he sought new work in the legitimate theater, such organizations as the Royal Shakespeare Company were not impressed that he had played an important role in *Star Wars*.

They should have been. He had shown himself to be a talented mime artist, and mime is at the root of theater; it is theater's essence, its beginnings. What was seen as so much camp was actually brilliant masquerade, one of the oldest forms of acting.

All this is now in the past for Tony. He has come to terms with Threepio's fame—and with himself. He has enjoyed the personal appearance tours ("I call them impersonal appearances, since I'm dressed as C-3PO") that have taken him to the United States and to other lands. He has put a picture of Threepio below his own in his passport. He hosted "The Making of *Star Wars*," the TV documentary. He conducted the London Symphony Orchestra at the Albert Hall when it played the movie's score at a film-music concert. He talks to American college groups and science-fiction conventions. A tour in connection with the reissue of *Star Wars* took him to fifteen American and Canadian cities, from Toronto to Miami. And a more lucrative contract for *The Empire Strikes Back* is enabling him to buy a new home.

Perhaps a little regret still lingers?

"Well, I feel I could be both Threepio *and* Anthony Daniels and that the public would accept us both. After all, Roddy McDowall was never seen as himself in *Planet of the Apes*, but he's known in his own right. I suppose one could say that the opposite applies to the *King Kong* remake. Who has ever heard of Rick Baker, the fellow in the gorilla suit?"

I had to confess that I hadn't.

"The difference, you see, is that I *care* for Threepio. I really do."

And that's what makes the creation so special.

Wednesday, June 6

John Barry has died. It was so terribly sudden that the entire company is in shock. Only two days ago I watched this lovable man directing second unit on the ice-hangar set. I asked him to tell me how his work complemented that of first unit. "We are getting atmospheric shots like newsreel material, which will be cut into the main action," he said. "It's such an exciting set to work on and it's wonderful being with old friends again."

Yesterday morning he was in Robert Watts's office and complained of feeling ill. He collapsed and was taken to a hospital. Today we learned of his death.

A Londoner by birth, John Barry began his career as a draftsman in the art department of that costly epic, *Cleopatra*. Over the years I had met him on several pictures and found him to be always very approachable. He could talk about his craft simply but interestingly. It must have been a terrible disappointment for Barry to have declined the offer to design *The Empire Strikes Back* in order to direct *Saturn 3*, and then be replaced in that capacity after internal disputes. The movie business can be very generous and sometimes very cruel.

Monday, June 11

Time is money in the film business, as in any other, but with *Empire* costing close to \$100,000 each day it is in the making, the decision to stop work today so that last respects might be paid to John Barry was a worthy one.

To the little Victorian church in the London suburb of Chiswick came many of his colleagues, joining members of his family in a service of remembrance. Those close to Barry during the making of *Star Wars*—Gary Kurtz, Norman Reynolds, Robert Watts, Bruce Sharmen, among them—were there. Kersh attended, and I saw Stanley Kubrick and Stanley Donen. Donen knew Barry long before the debacle over *Saturn 3*, which Donen is now directing. Barry had been that director's production designer on *Lucky Lady* during seven months in Mexico. It was to that Mexico location that Gary Kurtz and George Lucas traveled to talk to Barry about *Star Wars* which they were preparing.

"When we met him we knew at once he was the kind of person we wanted to work with us," Kurtz recalled in the course of some thoughts he spoke at the funeral. Indeed, Barry had been blessed with a good disposition, and that was why the work had to stop.

The destinies of films and the people who make them are equally capricious. For all the talk of schedules and money, the reality of that capriciousness was there as mourners left the little church in the fitful sun under the rain clouds of an English June. Limousines took the producers and directors away, friends departed, a family began its period of adjustment. Grief, which we find noble in animals, is an embarrassment to our species. Every man defeats it in his own way. I found myself thinking about tomor-

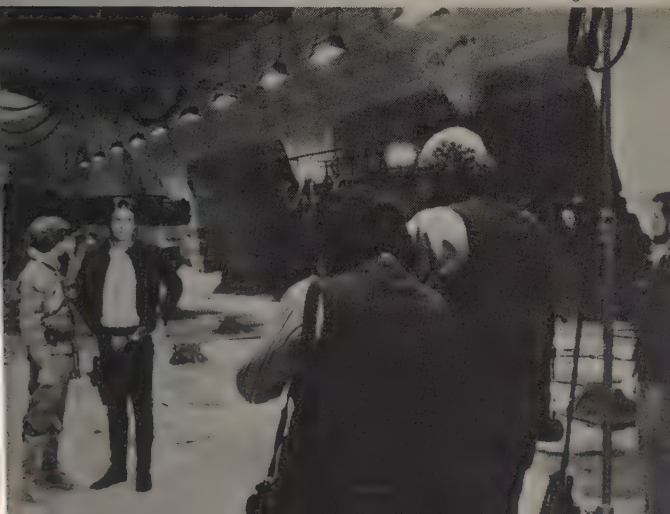


Douglas Dawson

Mark Hamill (left), in his costume as Luke Skywalker, waits while floor-effects crew readies Wampa Ice Creature claw.

Mark Hamill and Harrison Ford pose for publicity stills on ice-hangar set. Gary Kurtz at right.

Douglas Dawson





George Whitear

Irvin Kershner and C-3PO
(Anthony Daniels) prepare
for an upcoming scene.



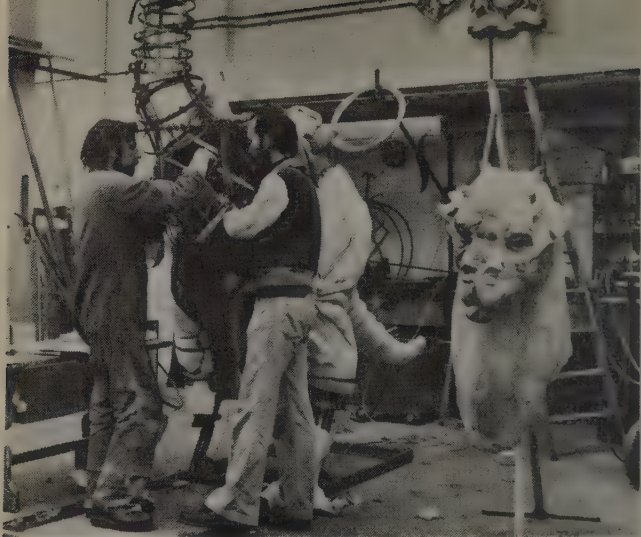
Irvin Kershner discusses
a scene with Kenny Baker,
concealed in his
R2-D2 costume.

George Whitear



Nancy Moran

Trench-booted Irvin Kershner confers with executive producer
George Lucas.



Richard Blanshard
George Whitear





George Whitear

Han Solo (Harrison Ford) on Tauntaun in Hoth scene being filmed at Finse, Norway. Irvin Kershner at left.

Opposite, above: Members of the art department build Tauntaun frame.

Opposite, below: Make-up lady applies finishing touches to Tauntaun head.



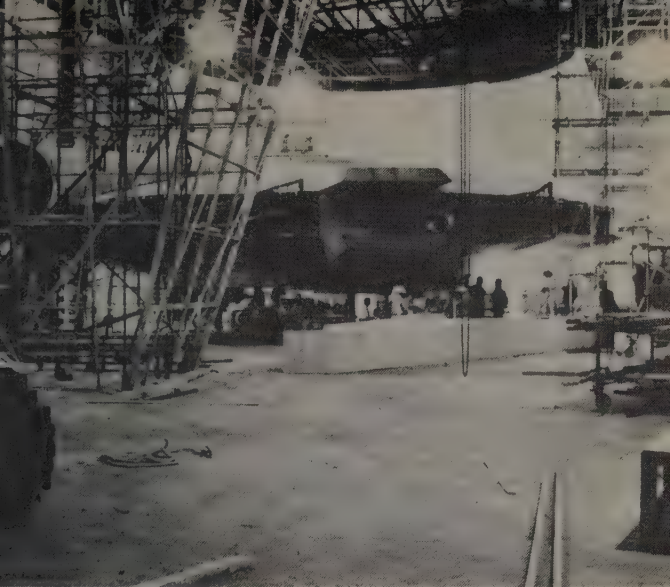
George Whitear

Gary Kurtz (left) and Irvin Kershner on location in Norway blizzard.

A clear day at last, and the crew takes camera equipment up the Finse glacier for the day's filming.

Knut Vadreth

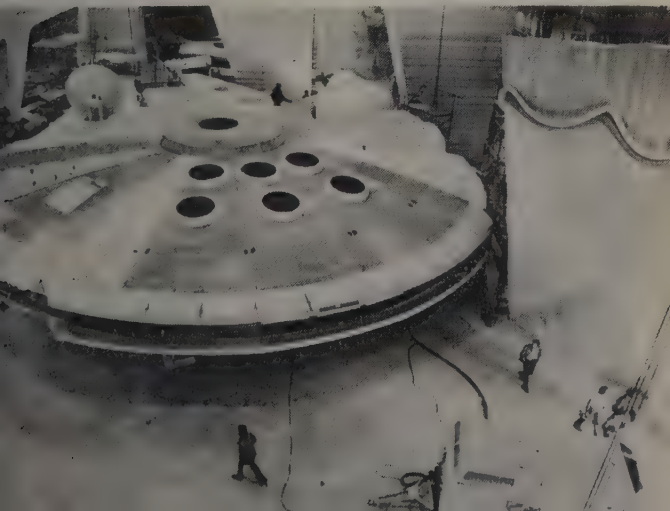




After transport from Pembrokeshire, the *Millennium Falcon* is reconstructed on the *Star Wars* stage at EMI-Elstree Studios.

Overhead view of the *Millennium Falcon* on ice-hangar set.

Douglas Dawson





Douglas Dawson

Ice-hangar set under construction. Rebel armored snowspeeders in foreground.

Discussing logistics and design of ice-hangar set are (from left) Ralph McQuarrie, Gary Kurtz, Norman Reynolds, and Peter Suschitzky.

Richard Blanshard





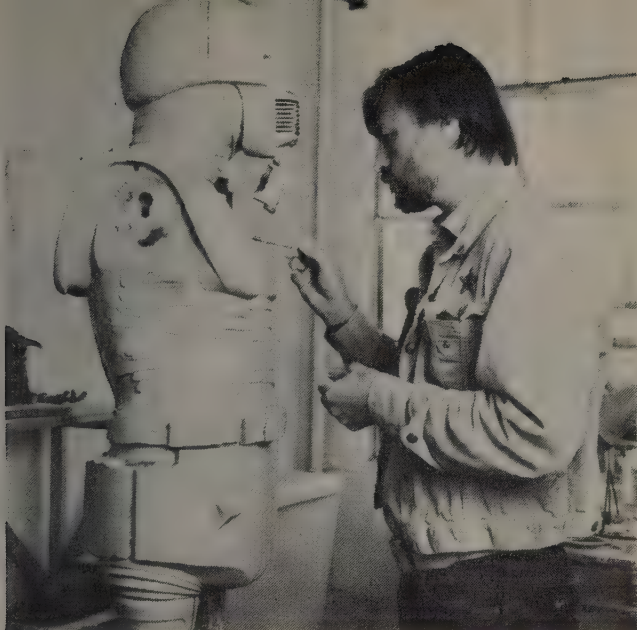
George Whitehead

Irvin Kershner rehearses a scene with Harrison Ford as Han Solo on the ice-cave set as Gary Kurtz (left) looks on.



David Steen
George Whitear





Richard Blanshard

An art department modeler builds the medical droid used in the medical-center scenes.

Opposite, above: Carrie Fisher and Harrison Ford run through a scene on the command-center set as Irvin Kershner (with viewfinder) and Peter Suschitzky assess positioning and lighting.

Opposite, below: Irvin Kershner works with Mark Hamill in snowspeeder cockpit. A VistaVision camera is used to film this sequence against a blue-screen backdrop (far left).



George Whitear

Relaxing on the medical-center set are (from left) medical droid, Anthony Daniels, Mark Hamill, Gary Kurtz, Irvin Kershner, and Carrie Fisher.

Opposite, above: George Lucas and Gary Kurtz observe the medical droid at work on Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill).

Opposite, below: Conceptual artist Ralph McQuarrie at his drawing board.



David Steen
Douglas Dawson





George Whitear

Irvin Kershner works with Chewbacca (Peter Mayhew) in preparation for prison-cell scene.

Peter Suschitzky (left) observes as Anthony Daniels manipulates C-3PO's head and mouth movements during prison-cell sequence.

George Whitear





George Whitear

Filming Cloud City hallway scene. Anthony Daniels lends the voice of C-3PO.

A wardrobe assistant cools off Peter Mayhew with a small battery-operated fan on Cloud City set.

George Whitear



Irvin Kershner positions
Darth Vader (David Prowse)
for a scene on Vader's
Star Destroyer.

George Whitear



Cosupervisor of visual effects
Brian Johnson and his staff
check the drive mechanisms
on the remote-controlled
R2 units.

David Steen



row, the day we put Han Solo in the carbon-freezing chamber.

Friday, June 15

There is to be a radio series based on the *Star Wars* stories.

In the U.S. it will be carried by National Public Radio and in Britain by the BBC.

A lunch today both Mark and Harrison expressed concern over the possibility of the characters they have created on film being played on radio by other actors. "Until something like this happens you don't realize how possessive you've become about the character you're playing," Harrison observed.

"I want to play my part on radio," Mark told Kurtz. "I'd play it for fun. I don't want some other guy playing Luke."

Mark has more imminent concerns. Marilou's baby is overdue.

I'm told we shall not announce the birth. Mark has concerns about the possible effect upon his image. I have to admit to a certain intolerance of this attitude. How can it possibly matter? A healthy young man becomes a father. What a fine example of uncomplicated sexuality. After all, if Elton John can admit to bisexuality and retain the respect and affection of his generation, how can becoming a father hurt Mark Hamill?

In a way, of course, Mark is right. There are girls entering puberty, teenagers aglow with early desire for whom Mark is a symbol. It is an ancient phenomenon: The unobtainable lights us through our early years. In my boyhood I was in love with Constance Bennett, though she was a glamorous mother figure. The early cinema presents one particularly outstanding example of how a screen idol can become the dream substitute for what is lost and irrecoverable: the worship

of Valentino. It was based essentially on the banished hopes and the anguish of millions of widows and fiancées of the generation killed in the First World War.

Mark believes that the single image is precious to his career right now. He may be right; I hope he's wrong.

Monday, June 18

The film may be said to be in the home stretch. We are two-thirds the way through principal photography. Independent of the California material, with which the studio footage will be amalgamated, we have averaged sixty seconds of screen time per day. That may not sound impressive, but with a film so complex technically it is an achievement.

I asked Gary Kurtz for his comments on the progress being made.

"The material looks good and we are very happy about that," he told me. "The filming has been a little slower than we would have liked. To some extent, that is in the nature of a picture of this kind. Almost every scene has special effects or other technical details which can break down and sometimes have. Some days go well, others don't. There's an element of luck in it all."

I asked whether the actors' temperaments had hindered progress.

"Tension between the actors comes and goes," he replied. "Some days they get on well, others they don't. But these are just the normal misunderstandings that take place under high tension. Actors, more than anyone else, suffer from continuous anxieties as to whether they're doing a good job, whether they're approved of by other actors or members of the crew. They inflict upon themselves a sort of endless psychiatric self-analysis. One actor says something to an-

other, and it's taken the wrong way; if they don't talk it out they get angry. The misunderstanding can last a day or two, or merely hours. I've seen such things on almost every picture I've done."

I wondered whether Mark, Carrie, and Harrison, virtually unknown when *Star Wars* was made, had developed a pronounced degree of star consciousness due to the celebrity of the film.

Kurtz replied that it was quite possible. "It does happen. In Carrie's case what might seem to be temperament can be explained because she is allergic to a number of things. She can't wear a lot of make-up without getting a rash. In many places she can't drink the water. She's naturally light in build, very sensitive, and doesn't always look after herself as she should. I've sometimes had to tell her that she doesn't pay sufficient attention to proper eating habits. She'll eat the wrong things and sometimes not eat at all. It's particularly important during a picture to live a disciplined personal life. All the actors are under strain. I think you will see as we approach the end of the schedule that we'll increasingly have to contend with this factor."

What we had to contend with on Friday were delays due to Carrie's late arrival. She had complained of stomach pains and spasms and was sent for a checkup; two injections had relaxed her and she came in for her scenes. But the crew was unaware of the background and drew its own conclusions: Carrie had been up all night. A movie studio is very parochial, and rumor and gossip spread quickly—filling the time technicians spend waiting for other technicians to perfect something in their particular specialization. Behind the scenes, in dressing rooms and offices, Kurtz is often the one who listens, advises, ameliorates. He sometimes has to play the big brother to his young principals. Inevitably, they are more aware now than they were three years ago of their own importance to the enterprise.

He put it this way: "We are following the most successful picture ever made. The actors are all a little

more mature. None of us can recapture the bright innocence of the first time. The fun is still there, and we don't want to lose it, but it's difficult to feel it all the time."

Tuesday, June 19

I have been talking to Kenny Baker, the lovable little entertainer who is the human element inside that famous robot, R2-D2. I stress Kenny's amiable disposition because there is a popular myth that dwarfs are ill-tempered, irascible people, a myth probably created by folklore which through the centuries has portrayed them as symbols of evil and ill-fortune.

Nothing could be less true of Kenny. This happy family man always has a cheery word. He adores the company of his friends, whatever their size, and behaves with such consideration and good humor toward his fellows that one forgets his dimensions. His outlook on the world, it seems to me, is a courageous one; he is a man of dignity and warmth.

Kenny cleared up for me something that many people must have asked themselves. What is the difference between a midget and a dwarf?

"A midget is a perfectly formed human being in miniature," Kenny said. "A dwarf has a deformation—misshapen arms or hands, and thick, short legs. I'm a mixture. People like me call ourselves little people. That's what kids in the street call us. They shout, 'Look, ma, there goes a little man' and usually get a whack on the head for it. Which is a shame, because that's what I am. I'd feel less good if they shouted, 'Ma, look at that dwarf!'"

At forty-five, Kenny is the father of two fine sons of conventional proportions, although his wife is a little person. Kevin is five, Chris is eight. The family, which includes two Siamese cats, lives in a neat little house in a suburb of London. In addition to his work

in the *Star Wars* films, Kenny also travels widely to perform his stage act (the Minitones in which he is partnered with another pint-size performer) all over Britain in cabaret and summer shows.

But life was not always so gratifying. Thirty years ago he faced unenviable prospects. He was homeless, the sixteen-year-old, only son of a broken marriage, and he was just three feet tall. What could life offer him? The outlook seemed pretty bleak.

"I certainly felt unwanted," said Kenny. "I was having moments close to despair. I'd gone to live in the English south-coast town of Hastings, where my stepmother had a house, but I wasn't happy there. I was an oddity. I wanted to be an engraver like my dad had been, but I hadn't received sufficient education. So I was thinking about being a gardener. It seemed a job a small person could do. At least, I could hide in the tallest shrubs. I was disconsolate. I guess I was lonely, too."

When Kenny was at his lowest ebb something happened to restore his faith. Indeed, when you think about the odds against its happening, it is enough to restore anyone's faith.

He was walking down a street in Hastings, feeling low and out of step with life, when he came face-to-face with another little person, a lady only three feet tall. She smiled and they talked.

Kenny recalls that meeting: "She told me she belonged to a troupe of performers, all small people, who were about to open a show at the town theater. She asked me what I was doing. I said I had just left school and was none too happy. She suggested that I go see the boss of the show. That afternoon I did, and I told him I had no experience but that I could roller-skate and ride a bicycle. That was the beginning. I joined the troupe. Dressed as a clown I roller-skated with a troupe of twenty other dwarfs and midgets twice nightly."

"No one could doubt the importance of coincidence after hearing that," I said to Kenny, who went on with his story.

"I hadn't been conscious of being small when I was at school in Birmingham and later at a boarding school in Kent. School is a world of small people. It was when I reached my teens that I knew I was different. At fourteen I was about three feet, two inches tall. All around me people were shooting up. But I was getting hardly any taller. My parents were normal size. When they split up I began to feel different and vulnerable. I knew I wouldn't grow any more. I had begun to feel a sort of misfit. If it hadn't been for that meeting in the street, I might have felt a misfit all my life. That opened the door to a new world, to show business. It gave me a sense of belonging. I've been happy ever since."

Kenny joined the troupe in 1951, but it didn't stay in Hastings.

"We went on tour to nearly every theater in Britain. These were pre-television years and the music hall was still a lively form of entertainment throughout the country. I loved the life. It wasn't just because I was with other little people, though that must have helped; it was because I felt they loved me. They were all older than I was. I was the kid of the troupe. At that time I was three feet, six inches tall and weighed sixty-eight pounds. But I didn't mind that. I had learned to be small. Small was beautiful and life was good. I stayed with the troupe three years."

Then, in the mid-1950s, British television made its postwar debut. As its influence broadened, the music halls began to close.

"Touring companies began to fold," Kenny recalls. "With so many theaters closing, it became impractical to tour a company like ours. Besides, the boss had lost his drive. He could see an era was ending. So the company folded."

The age of the music hall, which had lasted for more than a hundred years, was over. Some of its talents were able to adapt to the change, but many faded into thin air.

"I joined a circus," said Kenny. "But it wasn't my world, and I left after a couple of weeks. I didn't quite

know what to do. Then a friend suggested I learn to ice-skate. It seemed appropriate. I was on thin ice, anyway. My first break came with 'Babes in the Wood on Ice' in which I played a dog. Think of a skating dog! I toured with it for years. Other ice shows I did included 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs on Ice,' 'Peter Pan on Ice,' and 'Chu Chin Chow on Ice.' "

Meanwhile, of course, television was taking over, creating a climate in which talents not suited to its scrutiny stood little chance of survival.

But Kenny's talent adapted. He formed the Minitones, a comedy act that is pure music hall in derivation, a fast-talking, knock-about, gag-a-second affair that is now his bread-and-butter living. It has performed many times on television and in cabarets, and every summer the Minitones appear in one of the big, live, family shows at the holiday resort theaters of Britain.

In 1976 Kenny's agent called to ask whether he would perform as R2-D2, a robot character that would be featured in a movie to be called *Star Wars*.

"I didn't want to do it," Kenny recalls. "I turned down the role three times. It sounded untheatrical, uncanny, and I didn't like the idea of being stuck inside a moving, metal apparatus. But the more I learned of the story, the more I began to like the little fellow. I must admit, though, that while we were shooting, like others in the cast and most of the unit, I wondered what the movie was about. None of us knew. Only George Lucas knew, and Gary Kurtz. We followed instructions and tried to keep cool, which wasn't always easy during the location in the Tunisian desert."

Star Wars brought fame of a kind. Kenny made public appearances including one the producers might have frowned on had they known of it in advance. It was for a beer promotion in Chicago—the slogan: "The best thing to come out of a can since R2-D2." But through months of semi-fame Kenny remained levelheaded. When the furor died, he returned to cabaret and the summer shows.

In 1978 he prepared to repeat his portrayal of

R2-D2 in *The Empire Strikes Back*. This time a technically advanced, more comfortable robot encasement was devised for him, equipped with two-way radio for better contact with the director and technicians.

A few years ago Anthony Armstrong-Jones, then married to Princess Margaret, made a documentary which surveyed the world of small people. It was called "Born to Be Small," a most revealing film in which Kenny was featured.

"It showed the wide spectrum of little people," said Kenny. "They are in all walks of life. In the film there are theater and circus people, laborers, even a gynecologist. It made me feel good to belong to such a useful fraternity.

"You know, life has its special problems if you're small. I buy child-size jackets, but have to cut off the sleeves. I get smothered in a normal-size bed. I have difficulties reaching door handles. Things like that. But I would rather be small than tall. Tall people are so conspicuous. I can get lost in a crowd."

Thursday, June 21

Not since we shot on the *Star Wars* stage on the big ice-hangar set have I felt, as I do today, that zesty sense of moviemaking on the grand scale. Not that the spectacular carbon-freezing-chamber set is an easy one to work on. It is a lofty cylindrical structure in two sections, one atop the other, and looks like a giant drum that has been sliced horizontally through the middle. The upper part, reaching beyond the height of the gantries, is a huge clawlike tong that descends hydraulically into a deep circular hole in the lower part. Around the hole is a deck thirty feet in diameter and some thirty-five feet off the ground. The tong must plunge the manacled Han Solo into the sub-zero liquid metal in the chamber's frigid depths and haul

him up again frozen solid into a man-size metal block of vaguely human form.

Everything to do with this vast piece of apparatus is practical; it all works. We are filming on its center deck with several cameras, and Kersh is directing with the vigor of a Toscanini and a degree of that conductor's legendary frenzy.

Kersh sets up, talks to the technical chiefs, confers with each of his players, decides on his angles, and must oversee all the elements of this exceptionally complicated set. These diverse elements include the steam effects, hydraulics, lights, and sound. At times the noise of compressed steam escaping is cacophonous, the carbon fumes repellent. There are no guard rails around the deck's perimeter, nothing to prevent an absent-minded fall to the ground below. Extras playing stormtroopers have to be positioned perilously close to the edge.

At times it seems like organization by default, that the director's will alone gets things together. First rehearsals were a miasma of trial and error before Kersh got anything close to what he was aiming for. He was like a conductor whose orchestra was continuously moving the instruments around, but in time the action and timing are right and he is ready to begin the symphony.

All this is recorded on tape because I persuaded him to wear a cordless mike throughout the day, connected remotely to my tape recorder. I may be wrong, but I don't think that anything quite like this has been done before. Kersh agreed to be bugged and, showman that he is, obviously at moments enjoyed playing to the gallery. At other times the exceptional complexity of his task comes through the transcriptions, testifying to just how much stamina, invention, and patience is demanded of a director on such a complex set in so fluid a scene.

What I think the tapes convey, too, is a director striving to get his vision across in the face of special circumstances which must to some extent put him on the defensive. One such circumstance is that the three

young American principals—two of whom appear in the scenes being rehearsed on the tapes (Harrison and Carrie)—created the same roles in *Star Wars* which, of course, Kersh didn't direct. It would be only natural for them to believe that they know the characters better than he does.

Another consideration putting Kersh in a defensive situation is that the movie is behind schedule and appears likely to slip still further behind.

So, on the tapes, there is a note of exasperation as the director's enthusiasm entwines uneasily with an actor's concern for his or her performance, particularly in this scene as they are all in long shot and of secondary importance in the director's mind to the overall effect he is trying to achieve.

At this point in the story Han Solo is brought to what symbolically, if not actually, is his execution. The scene takes place in the carbon-freezing chamber on Bespin's Cloud City, a city administered by Lando Calrissian. Han hopes Lando will provide refuge for him and his companions, Princess Leia, Chewbacca, and Threepio. But soon after this group's arrival on Cloud City it is clear they have flown into a trap.

Boba Fett, a bounty hunter who is pursuing Han, has preceded them to Bespin and made a deal with Darth Vader. Vader's real quarry is Luke and by ordering Han to be put into carbon freeze, an ordeal that may prove fatal, Vader is merely experimenting. If Han survives being frozen solid, Luke will meet the same fate.

In all this, Lando Calrissian seems to acquiesce. In fact, he is powerless to do otherwise beneath the might of Vader. Naturally, the travelers feel they have been totally betrayed.

Another element the director must weave into this sacrificial scene is the emotionally tense relationship between Han and the princess. It has been a cat-and-mouse game up to now, but this scene of Han's departure into the void must surely be the moment of truth for both of them—and for the audience. How much to reveal, how much to imply? It is something

else Kersh has to decide before the scene is played.

And so, on a day meant for lazing in the summer sun, I followed Kersh onto the carbon-freezing-chamber set, he with his cordless mike, me with my receiver and antenna, feeling somewhat like a robot strayed from Hoth. It is 8 A.M.

We enter Stage 5, already throbbing with activity, and climb a stairway to the central platform where Kersh joins director of photography Peter Suschitzsky, who is lighting the set for the long shot of the group's entrance. They take turns looking through the lens.

Irvin Kershner: We've got to be very careful on this set never to put the frame-line on any strong horizontals. If we do, the light will be there as we follow the action, jumping in and out of the frame-line, and that worries me. Little things like that are so important. This set is so peculiar that we've got to keep watching tiny relationships of light like that. I'm also worried whether the set is too bright back there.

Peter Suschitzsky: (Suspecting, perhaps, that Kersh is playing to the mike) I think you're just worried about everything.

IK: Yes, I *am* worried about everything. Everything is important, especially little things like that.

PS: I thought that light was just fine.

IK: I want to steam it all up. I would like to see figures *through* steam. I know that's hard on the light because steam washes your light out, but we've got to do something. (Kersh proceeds to direct the shifting of various lights.) We have to be very careful. Go back a touch. Now go all the way back. I want the camera back there out of the way. Yes, put it there. Move the lights. I have to move everything! I want it all hazy, all figures in space. I must do this now before I position my actors. Once I get them into position we'll take two cameras and do the action, the whole bloody thing.

(Harrison Ford arrives, looking very much like a student who has strayed off campus.)

Harrison Ford: Hi.

IK: Good morning. I tried to call you yesterday to talk with you about the scene. I was working on it and discovered a lot of things that look very illogical the way it's presently set up.

HF: Yeah, it certainly is. And you've got one other problem. I tried to tell the art department about it some weeks ago. My shirt is wrong.

IK: That's no problem. They'll take that shirt off you when you go down into the carbon freeze.

HF: But this shirt has no sleeves.

IK: Shit.

HF: Do you want us to talk in your trailer?

IK: Yes, but I want to set up the scene of your entrance first. This is really your scene, Harrison. It affects you more than the others. So we'll lock ourselves away and talk.

HF: Well, I'll go to make-up.

(Harrison leaves for make-up and Kersh prepares a lineup.)

IK: All right. I need a stormtrooper here, a stormtrooper there, and I want one over here.

(David Tomblin, the first assistant director, is beside Kersh now.)

IK: He doesn't move well.

David Tomblin: Which one?

IK: That one over there. Was he there yesterday?

DT: Yes.

IK: Well, he must stop moving his head. I'm sure he wasn't there yesterday. (He positions another stormtrooper.) Would you stand back, please? Stand right in the corner, but don't fall off. If you *do* fall off, there are boxes below. You won't get hurt. Whoops! Don't stand quite so close or you *will* fall off.

(Kersh then positions Jeremy Bulloch, the actor playing Boba Fett.)

IK: Jeremy, come along and stand here. Hold it. *Hold* it. That's it, Jeremy. Try that. I also need a couple of guards. We have some, don't we?

DT: We've got two.

IK: Two is all right. (Turns to Suschitzky.) Some-

thing's wrong. Can you lower one of those lights on the stairway? It would be nice to have it dim on the stairway.

PS: I can't make it much dimmer without putting filters on, and there isn't the light for more filters.

IK: Oh, I see.

PS: You are having much more steam than we thought. It makes for very low key.

IK: I wish I could have taken those lights out altogether. I want the lights to float. Just float.

(There is further positioning and the effect is again discussed.)

IK: (Peering through camera) I wonder where the strongest shot is when bringing the entire group in. Is there no other way than along that ramp? (Suddenly spotting an angle from the top of a flight of stairs leading from the platform.) Wait a minute. There's something nice here. High angle! Oh, yes, this works. I never looked up here before. That's the trouble with this set, you can't get away from it to look at it! Watch it, Dave!

(Tomblin has narrowly missed falling off the set. About an hour has been absorbed by the time the main camera angle has been chosen and the guards positioned. Kersh is now looking at the set-up through different lenses; the numbers he refers to are the focal lengths in millimeters of the lenses.)

IK: Oh, boy. I've got it. Got it! Hold it. I saw something really interesting through the 150. You can see their feet. Look what happens.

PS: You want to be in that tight?

IK: Yes, yes.

PS: You don't want to see a wide angle?

IK: It looks so good this way. Let me look at it with the 100 now. The 100 looks great, too. All right, put a 100 in.

PS: Maybe we can combine the two.

IK: Yes, let's have a couple of cameras up there. (He calls for a run-through with stand-ins.)

IK: Action! I like the heads going out for a moment, then the heads appearing, then going out. And this

grab thing [the tong] just rising as they come around. I like the fact that all this is out of focus.

PS: While you're here, have a look at a 50.

IK: It becomes just an ordinary walk with a 50. With a long lens it's not an ordinary walk. I want to bring them in on some crazy shot so you don't know where they are. They stop. You see them look over. Then I'll cut into a couple of close-ups of Vader and Lando. When Vader says, "Put him in the carbon freeze. . . ." Boom! Cut to a close-up of the reaction. Cut back to the long shot as the Wookiee goes crazy. Everything starts happening. People start running. So, for a moment, you see the whole thing. But I want to withhold it. I don't want to give it all at one go.

(Forty minutes later the discussion is still proceeding.)

IK: Could the whole group come here, please? You see, it works very well on the long lens. Right to the point where they're in back of this grab thing as it's moving. Cut to here and they're going down and the thing continues to move.

(David Tomblin calls all the actors together to warn them yet again about the danger of falling off the set. They try another run-through. The noise is cacophonous. There is shouting and banging as carpenters and grips put final touches to the set.)

IK: Excuse me, could you leave one stormtrooper here? Just one. Give me a stormtrooper to stand right here.

DT: (To a second assistant director) Steve, I need another stormtrooper.

IK: I'm wondering if we want that tong thing down . . . actually it could be rising up.

DT: Weren't we going to have it come up as we pan across on the longer lens?

IK: Yeah, but the problem is it's such a big thing it cuts everything out. It becomes a great black mass with no definition on it. It would be interesting to bring them in when the tong is moving, so they're

hidden behind it as the pit closes up. No, that's too complicated.

DT: Why don't I have them do it once so you can look at it?

IK: I'll tell you what's better. Let's have the tong down as they come in and take their positions. Then we cut from their point of view and you see the thing rise up, revealing Vader standing there with Lando. He says, "Put them in the carbon freeze." See what I mean?

DT: Keep the platform up?

IK: No, no, I want it down. Actually, the tong should just go down to the platform, just to touch the platform.

DT: And the platform stays there until Han actually gets on it.

IK: That's right.

DT: (To a stagehand) Les, bring the claw down as far as it will go.

Les: The floor?

IK: No, the claw. The claw right down to the floor.

DT: Les, please *lower* the claw.

IK: (Exasperated) Just drop it down.

(They wait for the clawlike tong to be lowered.)

IK: (Observing through camera) Yes, I've got an interesting pattern going now. With the tight lens I'll take them all the way down till they disappear behind this claw, which is moving. They disappear behind it. We cut to a shot across that claw. As it rises, you see Vader.

DT: Excuse me interrupting. That claw. Does it go right into the pit?

IK: (Beside himself) Just put it down!

DT: Well, wait a minute, Kersh.

IK: (Still impatient) Leave the platform where it is. Just drop the claw.

DT: You don't want to have it tucked in the platform?

IK: That's *all* I need! Please leave it right where it is.

DT: Leave it where it is for the moment, Les. (To Kersh) Do you want to see the group in position?

IK: Yes.

DT: Come in, folks.

(Norman Reynolds, the production designer, has been waiting in the wings for a chance to talk to the director. He seizes the opportunity provided by the change of set-up to show Kersh a sketch of a window to be used on another set in a future scene.)

Norman Reynolds: It's just a sketch. I never have time to give you a finished drawing, I'm afraid, but it's this question of the window. Do we want a round window or a square window?

IK: Don't we want a round window?

NR: That's why I'm anxious that it comes to your attention now. We need enough of the window to take in a long shot and then you need to go close, right?

IK: No. No. No. Oh, yes.

NR: I just wanted to know. Gary has said he thinks it ought to be a square window.

IK: Why should it be a square window?

NR: Well, his thinking is that a square window suggests the idea of being on a ship.

IK: Don't they have round windows on ships?

NR: We could make it whatever shape you like. We could make it round or whatever. That was just his feeling.

IK: Well, first of all, Luke is standing in front of it. We start very close, then we pull back and we see the people watching him. There they are, this whole group against this wonderful scene of the fleet. The scene is really out there through the window. Then Leia walks past him. We go with her coming to the window and standing looking out and . . . I don't know, would a square window look elegant there?

NR: I'll have to make one.

(Now the scene is Kersh's trailer. Harrison has arrived to talk further about the scene to be filmed this morning. It is 11 A.M.)

IK: You see, Harrison, one thing I discovered that is going to affect us crucially is the fact that you

have no way of knowing that *you* are the one they are going to put in the carbon freeze. They bring all three of you in, but you don't know anything. The princess doesn't know anything. She just senses danger. None of you has ever been in this place. You don't know what this place is. That's the reality of the situation. So we have to add some lines.

HF: Yeah, there's something missing.

IK: Right.

HF: I don't have any lines. I'm on my way to an appalling fate and, well, it's no time for a speech, but surely I should say something, try to talk my way out.

IK: You've got heavily armed people all around you. Why do you think that Chewie and Leia have been brought in, too? I know why they are brought in. It came to me last night. They are brought in so you will not make problems. If you try to make a break, if you try to jump them, try to do anything so as not to go into that pit, they'll kill Chewie and Leia, too. They *use* them to subdue you.

HF: But they don't use them well enough, do they? Chewie tries to fight them off, but I don't raise a hand to help him.

IK: No, actually you stop him so he won't get himself killed.

HF: But I stop him *before* I know that if he fights he'll get himself killed. It's in Han's character to join Chewie in the fight. The bargain I'm likely to keep quiet for is if I'm convinced that Leia is safe because Lando has taken a shine to her.

IK: So we need another scene.

HF: No, all I have to do is ask Lando "What is going to happen to Leia?"

IK: "What is going to happen to *them*?"

HF: No, to her.

IK: All right, *her*.

HF: And he says, "She's too beautiful to harm." Something on that level. You know what I mean?

IK: He could say, "I'll see she's all right."

HF: How about "She will be mine"?

- IK: It's a little, well . . . besides, by that time you know he's stuck on Leia.
- HF: Yeah, but how does the scene play? There's no time for thought processes.
- IK: Suppose Lando walks in with you. No, let's say he's already there. Before Vader says, "Put him in the carbon-freezing chamber," you come to a stop and . . . no, I've got another idea. He comes from the foreground. Suppose that before Vader comes in, Lando comes over to you and says, "Listen, fella, I just want to tell you," but he doesn't know how to phrase it. Nevertheless, you understand his position. You don't like it but you understand it. No, that won't work either. That assumes you know that you're the one that's going to go into the pit. That's no good.
- HF: Let's just look at this, okay? Vader says, "Put him in the carbon-freezing chamber" and Boba Fett says, "What if he doesn't survive?" It takes a moment for everyone to realize how callous it all is. But there are still questions to be answered. For example, what about Leia?
- IK: You still assume they're going to do something to Leia, too, but you're the one who's going to be the guinea pig.
(Harrison rummages in Kersh's fruit bowl.)
- HF: Are there any more apples?
- IK: Have this one. It's been here a week but it's still good. As I was saying, they've brought Leia and Chewie along to make you behave.
- HF: But I don't think there should be any "buddy buddy" stuff with Lando.
- IK: Of course not. Lando, after all, is acting out of expediency. Wait. There is something interesting developing here. "What's up, buddy?" . . . "What's up, pal?" That's your line to Lando.
- HF: But I come in with my hands chained! Surely that gives me an idea of what's up. I'm the only one who's manacled.
- IK: Right. But I don't think you should be manacled when they send you down to the pit.

HF: I think I should be.

IK: (Still trying to devise the line.) "What's up, buddy?" "What's up, pal?"

HF: I think I *should* be manacled. It won't stop the love scene. I mean I don't have to put my arms around Leia to kiss her. I can't see how they would indulge in more than a straight kiss in such circumstances. It has to be rough and brisk and over with.

IK: Absolutely. I don't intend to mess around . . . "What's up, buddy boy?" . . . in the love scene.

HF: As I pass by her, I think Leia ought to say very simply, "I love you."

IK: (Tries it out) "I love you." And you say, "Just remember that, Leia, because I'll be back." You've got to say, "I'll be back." You *must*. It's almost contractually!

HF: If she says "I love you," and I say "I know," that's beautiful and acceptable and funny.

IK: Right, right. You know what? I may keep Vader out of this till the end. When all this stuff is over, Vader walks right in and all he says is "Put him in the carbon-freezing chamber." Why should he watch all this other stuff going on?

HF: He's there because he's telling Boba Fett what he intends to do to me.

IK: Then I guess he *has* to watch everything.

HF: He could walk away.

IK: No, he couldn't. There's no place to walk. (Laughs) I'm really stuck here.

HF: I think he could walk out and Boba Fett be the one to say, "Put him in the . . ."

IK: No, no, no, no. . . . Boba can't. . . . No, no, no, no.

HF: Well, Vader has given me to Boba Fett.

IK: (Now wrestling with Boba Fett's lines) "What if he doesn't survive? He's worth a lot to me."

HF: I'm going to get a cup of coffee.

IK: "What if he doesn't survive?"

(Kersh tries several variations in Harrison's absence and when the actor returns he's still at it.)

IK: "What's up, pal or buddy?" . . . "What's up,

pal?" That's nice. It's ironic. And he says, "You're going to be frozen." I don't like frozen. "You're going into the carbon-freezing chamber." And he knows you're likely to die if you go in there.

HF: I would know it, too!

IK: "You're being put into carbon freeze." How about that? And you ask, "What about them?" indicating Leia and Chewie.

HF: But I can't say, "What about them?" I said the same thing in the cell scene we've already shot.

IK: So, instead of saying, "What about them?" you say, "They're putting me in the carbon freeze," and Leia asks why and you say, "It'll make me behave better."

HF: You don't like "To make me more polite"?

IK: Polite is too obscure. *Behave* is much better because you've been a rascal, a thorn in their side. It implies a form of punishment. Leia says, "It could kill you," and that sets Chewbacca off. (Reprising lines so far) "What's up, pal?" . . . "You're being put in the carbon freeze" . . . "Why?" . . . "It'll make you behave." It is sadistic.

HF: Leia's got to be the one to recognize how sadistic it is.

IK: "What's up, pal?" "You're being put in the carbon freeze." "Why?" "It's make you behave." No, it's too clever. The problem is I've got a two-part harmony going.

HF: I still don't like "It'll make me behave."

IK: How about, "It'll make me easier to transport." You see, you're a guinea pig, a substitute for Luke Skywalker, but we can't say that.

HF: "What's up, pal?"

Together: "*You're being put in the carbon freeze.*"
(Later, on Stage 5 again, Kersh is joined by Billy Dee Williams.)

Billy Dee Williams: (Quietly) "You're going to be put in the carbon freeze." (Louder) "You're going to be put in the carbon freeze."

IK: (Joining him to speak Han's line) "Why?"

BDW: "To keep you polite."

IK: (As Boba Fett) "But that could kill him."
When Vader says, "Put him in the carbon freeze,"
you've got to look angry as hell.

BDW: Where's Leia at this point?

IK: Carrie'll be right here and we'll work that out.
(Carrie Fisher arrives. She has not yet been in
make-up.)

Carrie Fisher: Hi . . .

IK: I've just changed the scene.

CF: I know. Harrison told me.

IK: I've just changed it because it didn't answer one
important thing: Why are you there to watch the
execution? Why don't they take him out of jail and
just do it? It doesn't make sense, does it?

CF: No.

IK: There's only one reason. They do it to keep the
victim from fighting, from trying to take people
with him. Vader doesn't want problems like that.
He brings you along for that reason. You have to
understand that, or otherwise you would just stand
there like a lump. So I'm starting this scene in a
situation where you have no idea why you're there.
Han says to Lando, "What's up, *pal*?" very sar-
castically. Lando says, "You're being put in the
carbon freeze." But he feels miserable about it,
powerless. Vader says, "Put him in the carbon
freeze" and everybody goes nuts. I've changed the
scene because the emphasis was on ignorance before.
I don't want it to be on ignorance, I want it to be
on knowledge.

CF: No crying, no kissing?

IK: The kissing comes after. The change is just the
beginning of the scene. The rest is the same. So
I'm just giving everybody their new script pages . . .

CF: (Disconcerted) I don't know where I am now.

IK: (Exasperated) All you did before was exclaim,
"No!" That's all you had. Do you want to say,
"No!"? You can say, "No!"

CF: Well, I don't know where I'll be when he says,
"Put him in the carbon freeze." I could do a big

gesture. I could slap Lando or something. How near is he to me?

IK: He's right next to you.

CF: Could I slap him?

IK: What you really want to say is "You bastard," but you can't say that.

CF: Do I have to be so polite? There's too much politeness about. I could just have the bad manners to slap him.

IK: All right, all right. Great. You look up at Lando and just slap him. Okay? At this point Vader says, "Put him in the carbon . . ." Now you can grab Han. You don't want to let him go. Let's not be rational. I don't want to be rational at this point.

CF: Right, I don't want to let him go. But if I *do* love him, how does he know I love him? Maybe if I threw myself in front of him?

IK: That's possible. Then, immediately, two storm-troopers come and start pulling you away. That's when Chewbacca goes crazy. It's got to be *physical* action. Lines don't do it. So let's say you slap him. (Turns to Billy Dee) Billy, this is the most difficult scene I have in the film. I've been going around looking at each person's point of view, right? I've got Boba Fett's. I've got Han's. I know Chewie's. I've got Vader's. I'm trying to get what Leia's is. Right now she has absolute contempt for you. So instead of talking to you, she'll attack you and at that point two guards come in to pull her off. You see?

BDW: Well, the only thing I feel about that is I've been attacked so many times in the movie.

IK: It's more interesting than lines.

CF: He could even slap me back.

IK: No, he couldn't.

BDW: What happened to my line "I'm powerless"?

IK: That's in. You say it to her when you quiet her down. What you are trying to convey is "I'm powerless, can't you see, I'm powerless to help." You're trying to make her understand.

CF: What you're really saying is that as a *man* you feel powerless.

BDW: Powerless means "I can't." I don't think that's right.

IK: (Turns to Carrie) Now you see what a problem it creates if you slap him.

BDW: Well, let's just try it that way.

(Suddenly, Carrie gives Billy quite a powerful whack.)

BDW: Don't hit me like that!

CF: Did it hurt?

BDW: Of course it hurt.

CF: I'm sorry. How *do* you hit someone?

IK: You *telegraph* it to him.

BDW: If you want to hit me, fake it.

IK: (Concentrating on the lines again) "What's up, pal?" "You're being put in the carbon freeze." "Then why are *they* here?" "To keep you polite". . . .

(Ten minutes later. . . .)

DT: (Rather confidentially) Kersh.

IK: Yeah?

DT: Do you want these little pinpricks of steam coming through or not?

IK: (His mind on something else) Yeah, yeah.

DT: You do?

IK: Can I have my script? Somebody get my script. It's on the floor. Thanks. Now, this is what we're going to do. "What's up, pal?" "You're being put in the carbon freeze." "Why are they here?" "To make you behave." Cut. And at that point . . .

(The steam is turned on. The noise is stupefying.)

IK: Oh, boy, I'm getting out of here. This is too much.

DT: Turn the steam down, boys.

IK: Turn it down a little. (The noise of the steam dies down.)

DT: Sorry, but we have to blow it up before we can turn it down.

IK: That's all right. At this pressure it doesn't make so much noise. So while everybody's getting dressed and ready, I'm going to . . .

DT: Everybody is dressed.

IK: Oh, are they? I gotta take a leak so bad.

DT: Well, go have your leak while I blow this steam pressure up again.

IK: Yes, blow it up. I'll be right back.

DT: Watch it, Kersh, you're too near the edge.

(The incredible noise of the steam at full pressure is heard again.)

(It is 12:50 P.M. and they're nearly set for a take.)

IK: Carrie? Where is she? (Shouts) Carrie. (She comes over to him) We're going to shoot in about five minutes. What's going to happen is this—I've reversed the whole thing . . .

CF: You talk to Harrison about the changes, but I always feel that you do it behind my back.

IK: No, no, no, we haven't rehearsed it yet.

CF: But I didn't know until now.

IK: I couldn't tell you before.

CF: I would just like to be there when you decide to change things.

IK: (Getting angry) You weren't here to be there.

CF: (Shouts) I was in the studio!

IK: Okay. Okay.

CF: I yelled at Harrison about the changes.

IK: Don't yell at Harrison. Yell at me.

CF: There's no reason for me to be mad at Harrison.

IK: All right, all right. Okay!

CF: But when he came to me with the changes, I got mad at him and it screws us up.

IK: Where is Harrison?

DT: He's downstairs. We're getting him up.

CF: He is *very* angry with me. And he has a total right to be. I should not speak to him in that way . . .

IK: Okay, okay.

DT: We're ready, Kersh.

(The steam starts; the voices get even louder.)

CF: Harrison shouldn't have to come to me with the changes. You should.

IK: He was eager to.

CF: I know he was. And now I have to perform

at half an hour's notice scenes that have all been changed.

IK: Your *performance* is not changed.

CF: All I'm asking is to be invited to watch you guys get a scene together. It may not center around me, like this one doesn't, but I'm *involved* in it.

IK: Okay. Are you clear about it now?

CF: Yes, the only thing I'm not clear about is. . . .

IK: (To himself) Jesus, what a day! I've got problems with the actors. Everybody's furious with everybody else. . . .

(And still the sound of steam. Perplexed and harried, Kersh struggles on, only to be confronted by Dave Prowse, anxious to promote his newly published physical-fitness book. It is not an entirely welcome diversion.)

Dave Prowse: Kersh, I'm going to change the subject. Completely take your mind off all this. My book is just out.

IK: (Baffled) What book?

DP: I've written a book called *Fitness is Fun* and I want to give you a copy.

IK: Really? (Not very convincingly) I would love that.

DP: Yes, it comes out on Saturday.

IK: Great! Lovely! You actually have the time to write a book?

DP: It took me about nine months to write. It's about exercising. It's a textbook on weight lifting. You would love it.

IK: Weight lifting! Well, okay, I'll buy one. (As an aside into the mike) Whew! Boy, this is some scene. It really is some scene.

(Later, Kersh talks to Prowse about Vader's part in the scene.)

IK: Now, Dave . . .

DP: (Interrupting him) There's going to be this big melee going on, isn't there?

IK: No. There's no melee. There's no melee at all! When they finish the dialogue you say, "Put him in the carbon freeze," and that is the moment of reali-

zation of what is about to happen. Leia is horrified. She holds on to Han. Chewie goes berserk. *Two* stormtroopers rush forward . . . (The steam effect is nightmarishly loud) Jesus, I can't work with all this *steam* going. I have to shut all the steam off and do the rehearsal without the steam. You could go nuts with this noise. I know they have to check it all out but . . .

DT: (Shouts to a stagehand) Steve, hold the steam.

IK: (With relief) Thank you.

DT: Okay, let's go for a rehearsal.

IK: All right, it's a rehearsal. We do everything minus the steam. All right? Action!
(Steam starts slightly.)

IK: *Minus* the steam!
(The steam persists.)

IK: Oh, no!

DT: Hold your positions and keep quiet.

IK: We have to have the platform coming up, you see. The *platform*, not the tong. It should be coming up.

DT: Don't you want to rehearse the whole piece?

IK: No. I want to do the shot now, up to the point where they do their dialogue.

DT: All right, gentlemen, we're going to shoot. Take your positions, please.

IK: (To the actors.) Just do the dialogue as you did it before.

HF: "What's going on, pal?"

BDW: "You're being put into the carbon freeze."

HF: "Well, why are *they* here?"

BDW: "To make you behave."

IK: You see, Billy, you really don't know. You have to guess at what's implied when Lando says, "To make you behave." It's ambiguous. (The steam is once more deafening) Oh, God! Who needs this?

DT: Stand by We're almost ready to shoot.

IK: (An aside into the remote mike) Almost ready for fate to take over! At least nobody has fallen off the set yet. I even have an impulse to jump. It looks so inviting.

(Hardly anything can be heard above the steam.)

DT: We're going to shoot.

IK: I think you've got a little too much steam coming up on the left. We've got so many people up here. Jesus Christ! Is there anyone we don't need? (Activity on the stage is at a peak.)

DT: Here we go.

IK: All right. Action!

DT: (Very loudly indeed) ACTION!

(They go into a take.)

IK: Cut! I don't know why, but I saw something move up there. I can't quite make out what it was. Let's go again right away. Action!

DT: ACTION!

(At 1:45 P.M. the first shot is achieved. They go again.)

IK: Cut.

DT: That was a beauty, wasn't it, Kersh? Everything worked. The timing worked fantastically.

IK: (Disappointed) Boba Fett started walking too soon. He screwed me up.

DT: You want to go again?

IK: Yes. Right away.

DT: One more try, please. Now, Boba, wait till Vader stops before you go across. Okay? Right, here we go. ACTION!

(The steam goes on again and they do a third take.)

IK: Cut! Print it. Print those last two takes.

(Kersh moves away from the camera, followed by David Tomblin.)

DT: What did you think of the last one, Kersh?

IK: (Although reluctant to give his opinion) Perfect. In fact, it was very nearly good!

Wednesday, June 27

Many an actor likes to spend the lunch hour in his dressing room resting or keeping his mind firmly on

the scene he is playing; therefore I felt that Harrison Ford accepted my invitation to lunch with me out of politeness. For months we have seen one another on the set, but I know very little about him except for his professional credits. If he were to talk about himself in more depth, I felt, I would be able to write about him more dimensionally, but throughout our meeting he deflected this purpose with good-natured firmness. Finally, he said: "I don't blame you for asking these questions—it's part of what you have to do—but there are areas of my life which don't belong to the movie business. If I were to start revealing them to you, the process would never stop." I sympathized. Then he looked at me more earnestly. "I'm reshaping my life," he said. "I am getting a divorce. There's no continuity at the moment. My lifestyle isn't trendy. I'm the kind of guy who thinks he's rich if there's a \$5,000 check in the mail. There's so much I want to do, but first I want to return to California and become my own person again. People know me as an actor. Right now that's all I want them to know."

It would have been insensitive to probe any further. We talked inconsequentially for the rest of our meal. I have liked what I have seen of Harrison ever since our first meeting after his unusual arrival at Finse. While he has always been courteous, at times I've felt that beyond his calm exterior a sort of rage is burning. For what reason, I can only guess. Perhaps he is tired of playing Solo. It's not the only game in town. I may be wrong, but I don't think he will play it again. In an industry that can as quickly make as break its idols, reticence is a valuable asset. To be able at times to say "no" firmly but politely is a key to survival in this business. It requires strength, self-confidence, and a high degree of talent.

Friday, June 29

This week has been an anxious one. We are like a ship that has sailed two-thirds of the ocean and still has no sight of land. What is more, there appear to be undercurrents. Of course, movie productions have a tendency to look inward, to dramatize their problems on a canvas made smaller by their introspections. President Carter is attending a momentous summit conference, refugees by the tens of thousands flounder in the China seas, but here at Elstree our week has been affected to a point of unease by the condition of our principal actor's thumb.

Every commercial enterprise has its parochial side, but the difference between the movie business and other operations is that the risk factors are so unique that any alarm at the center spreads through the corpus with the speed of light. However, it must be said that throughout this difficult week the producer and his associates have remained calm, despite what must have been many deep concerns. For in what other industry is the safety of an investment of over \$20 million and the livelihood of a host of skilled and talented people dependent on the fitness and stability of one young man? I can think of none.

The week began auspiciously. The Hamill baby arrived, a son they named Nathan Elias, thus ending a period of tension for the couple. Marilou was much overdue. She began her labor while visiting friends in Hertfordshire, and the baby was born in the early hours of Monday. Mark was up all night, staying at the hospital and calling relatives and friends. Nevertheless, he reported for work the same day and in the afternoon did two takes of his free-fall from space to the exterior of the *Millennium Falcon*. It was not an easy fall, and a stunt double would have been used

had it not been a close-up shot. Afterward, Mark thought he might have sprained his left thumb.

At the end of the day he drank some champagne with the crew in celebration of the new arrival. A little later, I joined him in his dressing room while we composed a telex containing information about the birth for dispatch to Lucasfilm and Twentieth Century-Fox, to which we added the cautionary advice that it was not for release to the media but for briefing if inquiries were received. But Mark wanted to tell Army Archerd of *Variety*, too, and we made up a cheery telex that ended: "So now I have a little English son. God Save the Queen." Effectively, then, we broke the story immediately.

All this was natural enough, for Mark was proud and happy, and it blew any secrecy to the wind. The *Star Wars* team has never been guilty of taking itself over-seriously in its relations with the media, and to have been devious about so pleasant a matter on the grounds that Luke's image might be adversely affected would not have been typical of this company.

So I left the studio that evening, thinking all was well in our tight little world of make-believe, reflecting that this mid-summer child will be only twenty-one in the year 2000. I thought, too, of the children of the boat people in the troubled China seas and prayed that in the year 2000 the world will afford all of its children comfort, security, and love.

But I was to learn the next day that Mark became angry after I had left. His thumb swelling, he called Kurtz and took him to task for not having used a double that afternoon. Kurtz responded by summoning a stunt double and a wigmaker to the dressing room. If Mark was going to be indisposed, then they must be prepared to shoot without him. This ruffled Mark all the more.

For weeks he had prepared for the laser duel in the big confrontation sequence with Darth Vader. Now it was possible a double would be used, and all this at a time when Mark had undergone the stresses of becoming a father! To someone in the first flush of fatherhood it's the real, not the make-believe, world

that matters. With fatigue and indignation welling up inside him, Mark ordered everyone from his dressing room. Then he was driven home in ill humor.

The next day work had to be abandoned. On Stage 4, beside the set on which Luke was due to make his heroic entrance, a small group of stagehands was disconsolately playing cards. Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday passed, and still Mark was indisposed. I talked to Kurtz about the implications. It was better, he said, that Mark's thumb be allowed to heal completely rather than risk a more serious sprain at the height of the confrontation sequence. It would also cover the production from the insurance standpoint.

An abandoned stage is like an empty house to which no birds come. This morning I looked in on Stage 4 again. The card game was still going on.

It's a small world, this world of moviemaking, and we are all interdependent. That's what the professional in Mark surely knows. I've seen too much of him to think otherwise. Show business is full of stories about those who failed to realize one thing: You're only safe at the top if you care about those who are holding you up. Mickey Rooney once came crashing down—and became a thoroughly nice person. Paul Newman made the archetypal error recently of telling an autograph seeker to get lost. He got a bad press for it. Fame is a street of hazards.

Monday, July 2

Everything is in motion again. Mark is working, bright as a button. Filming of the first scenes of the confrontation between Luke and Vader has been resumed. Mark is also required on Stage 8 for scenes with Carrie, Billy Dee Williams, and Peter Mayhew when the occupants of the *Millennium Falcon* see Luke appear on their spaceship's hull after his fall through space.

Meanwhile, on the *Star Wars* stage, another environment is in the making; it will be the last to be filmed in the schedule of principal photography. This set is the bog planet and will take several weeks to build, though sections of it have already been prefabricated on other stages. In fact, we may find ourselves in the position of having completed everything else *before* the bog planet is ready, in which case there will be a "hiatus."

There's been talk of a hiatus for some time, and I hadn't heard the word applied before to a film production. The term means a gap, an empty space, a break in continuity. During it the entire crew would have to be retained, for to discharge and then try to reengage them would not be feasible. Technicians are freelancers and many would disperse to new engagements. So a hiatus is an expensive undertaking. Yet it will be unavoidable if the bog planet is not ready by the time we have completed all the preceding work.

This situation, looked at superficially, could be interpreted as a catastrophe of planning, but the facts tell a different story. At the root of the problem was the fire that destroyed Stage 3. Only a few days prior to the first unit's departure to Norway, *The Empire Strikes Back* had to be radically rescheduled in terms of stage availability. Attempts were made subsequently to rent space at other studios, but with production at a peak level that proved impossible.

Indeed, the loss of a vital stage made the production more vulnerable to other unforeseeable delays such as those caused by the Norwegian weather. The bitter winter in England at times halted the building of the *Star Wars* stage, so filming there started later than was planned. Then the complex ice-hangar set was built on the new stage. But not until those sequences were filmed and the paraphernalia of the ice planet taken down could construction on the tropical bog-planet set begin.

Now it is taking shape. Dagobah, with its moody swamps and tangled thickets, is being crafted into existence twenty-four hours a day by shifts of car-



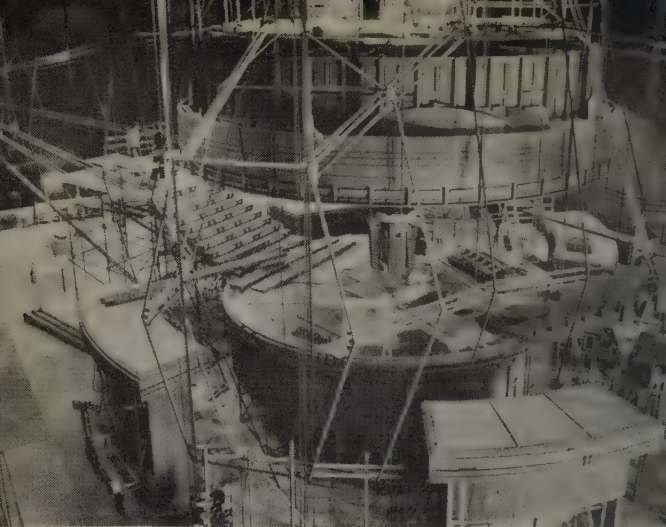
Filming the meditation-sphere sequence.

George Whitear

Kenny Baker (center) observes as adjustments are made on his R2-D2 costume.

Richard Blanshard



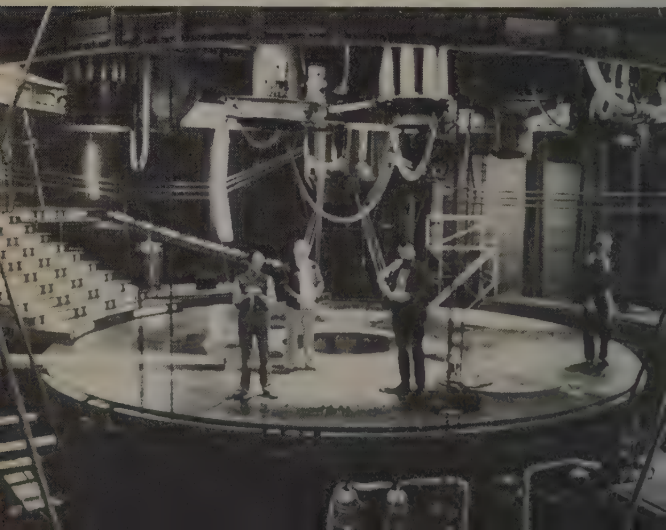


Douglas Dawson

Carbon-freezing chamber set under construction.
Note clawlike tong above center of platform.

Gary Kurtz checks completed carbon-freezing chamber set.

Irvin Kershner





George Whitear

Irvin Kershner directs Billy Dee Williams as Lando Calrissian on carbon-freezing chamber set. Ugnaught (hogman) in center background.

Irvin Kershner working with Peter Mayhew (Chewbacca), Carrie Fisher, and Billy Dee Williams on carbon-freezing chamber set.

George Whitear



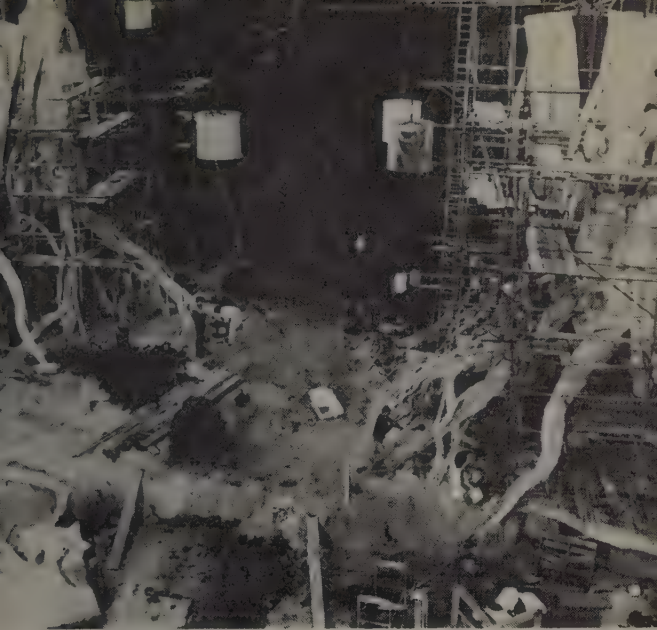


George Whitear

Irvin Kershner and Harrison Ford between scenes.

Opposite, above: The bog-planet set under construction on the *Star Wars* stage.

Opposite, below: Crew members put finishing touches on bog-planet set. Luke Skywalker's X-wing in background.



Murray Close
George Whitear



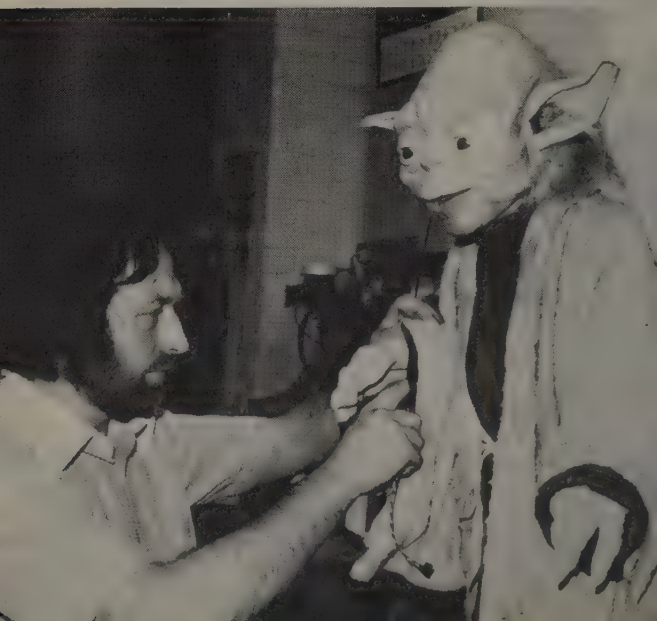


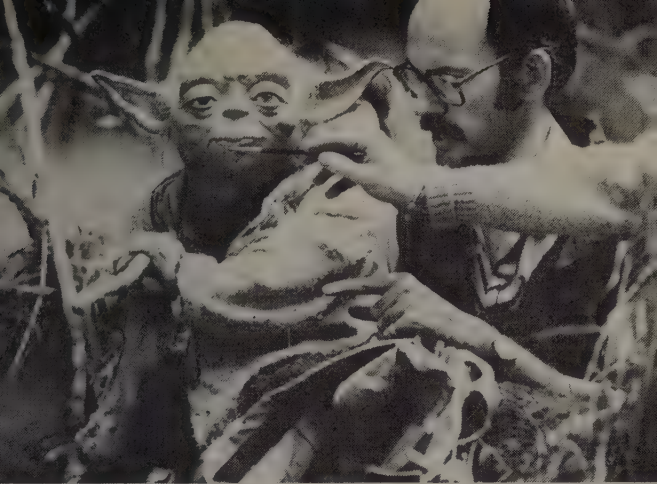
Douglas Dawson

Make-up supervisor Stuart Freeborn creating Yoda head.
Rubber prototype Yoda at right; Joe Johnston Yoda sketches against wall.

Finishing touches are put on Yoda in the art department.

George Whitear



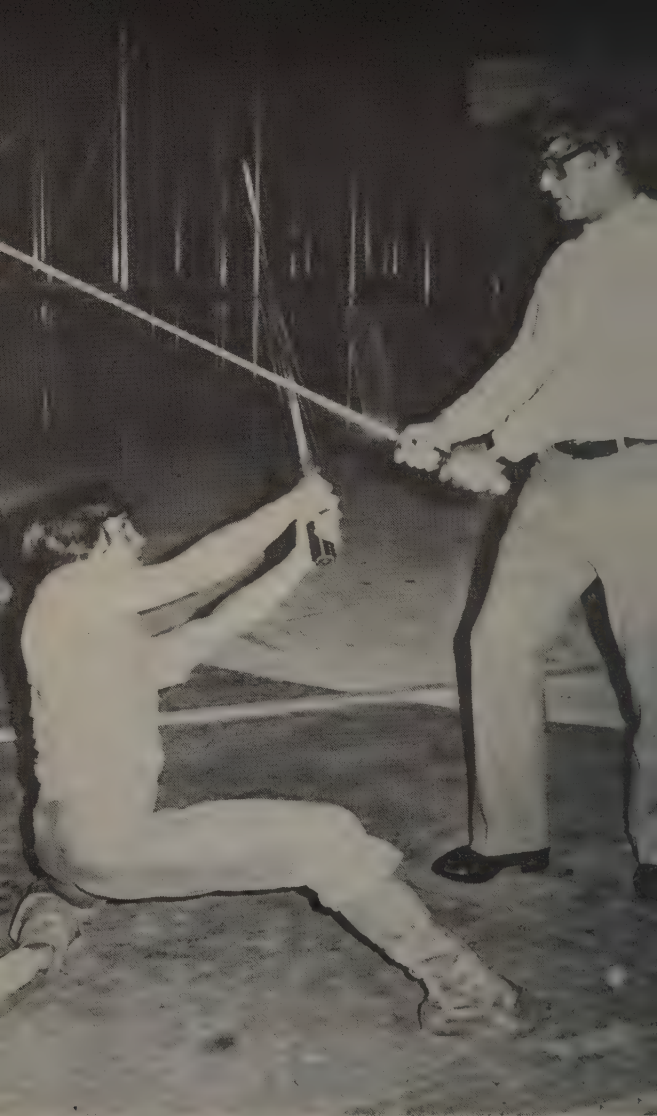


George Whitear

George Lucas meets Yoda in the Jedi Master's tiny house
on the Dagobah set.

Gary Kurtz





George Whitear

Mark Hamill and David Prowse prepare for confrontation duel
between Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader.



George Whitear

Mark Hamill, Gary Kurtz, and Irvin Kershner on bog-planet set.



George Whitear

The film unit at work on the bog-planet set, filming Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill) climbing out of the bog lake in which his X-wing has crash landed.

Mold of Mark Hamill's hand being made for film's closing scenes.

Lynn Goldsmith





George Whitear

Filming Luke Skywalker's (Mark Hamill) fall through Cloud City exhaust pipe.

Filming confrontation duel between Darth Vader (David Prowse) and Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill).

George Whitear





George Whitear

Confrontation duel on Cloud City.
Note mattresses on floor; matte painting at left.

George Lucas and Gary Kurtz visit Industrial Light and Magic.
Cosupervisor of visual effects Richard Edlund is in center.

Terry Chostner





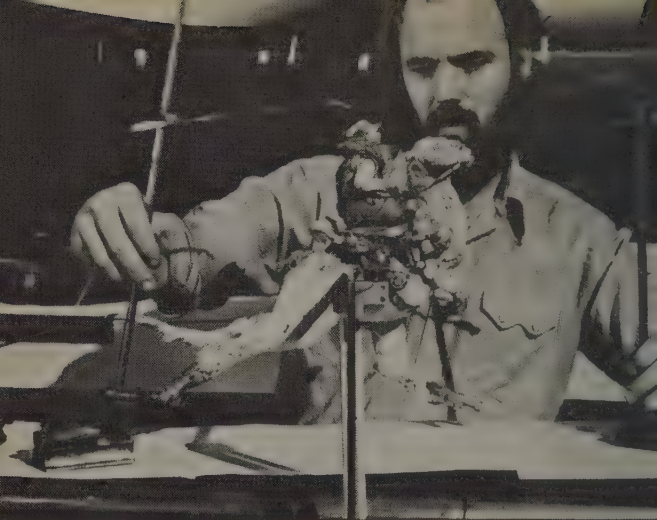
Terry Chostner

ILM modelmakers work on eight-foot-long Star destroyer Model.

Phil Tippett animates snow walker on simulated snowscape at ILM.

Nancy Moran





Terry Chostner

Phil Tippett animates Tauntaun at ILM.

Phil Tippett prepares Tauntaun for filming
on simulated Hoth snowscape at ILM.

Terry Chostner





John Williams.

George Whitear

John Williams conducts recording session for *The Empire Strikes Back*. Note screen in background showing Chewbacca (Peter Mayhew) in Hoth scene.

George Whitear





Irvin Kershner and Sir Alec Guinness.

George Whitear

penters, plasterers, and riggers working around the clock. Hiatus or not, the show's the thing.

Tuesday, July 3

When you think of *Star Wars*, what do you remember about the costumes the leading characters wear? One man in particular hopes you won't recall them all that vividly, that instead your memories are of the characters and action they helped to portray. That man is John Mollo, who, as costume designer for *Star Wars*, was asked to design costumes audiences wouldn't notice. It is the policy he is following again for *The Empire Strikes Back*.

This approach was made clear to him by Lucas and Kurtz when the now-legendary space fantasy was in preparation. He recalls that the filmmakers were emphatic that the style be a down-beat one.

"They didn't want anything 'designery,' to use a trade term," Mollo says. "Nothing that would take away from an audience's concentration on the action or appreciation of the characters. A down-beat style in that sense is not easy to achieve; it had to be balanced with the need for originality and visual interest. But it was good thinking. We had to find that balance. George left me in no doubt. 'Audiences mustn't consciously notice the costumes,' he insisted. 'If they do, you have gone wrong'."

John Mollo didn't go wrong. The costume designer for *Star Wars* won an Academy Award—and an invitation three years later to be costume designer for *The Empire Strikes Back*.

Born in London in 1931, Mollo studied at the Farnham Art School, near London, and then joined his family's civil-engineering company. On his own, he had developed a deep interest in historical military costume, and this was to prove the seed of his film career.

His chance came in 1964 through his younger brother, Andrew, a film technician who has subsequently become a director. Andrew Mollo was then working for Tony Richardson, who was preparing to direct *The Charge of the Light Brigade* in Turkey. John Mollo's self-taught knowledge of military costume so impressed Richardson that Mollo was appointed historical adviser to the picture for which some 3,000 costumes were made from his designs.

This established Mollo in the field of historical costume design and led to *The Adventures of Gerard*, a film which called for costumes of the Napoleonic period. When Stanley Kubrick was planning *Napoleon* he, too, turned to Mollo, but that picture proved to be an epic that was abandoned after six months' preparatory work.

Mollo's next film was the big-canvas melodrama, *Nicholas and Alexandra*, which told the fateful story of Russia's last ruling royalty and Rasputin's influence on them. But the film turned out to be less commercial than prestigious. This also proved true of *Barry Lyndon*, Kubrick's beautiful film set in late eighteenth-century Ireland. Mollo served as the film's historical adviser. Then came *Star Wars*.

In addition to those briefing sessions with Lucas and Kurtz, Mollo relied for inspiration on some sketches drawn by the saga's design consultant and conceptual artist, Ralph McQuarrie.

"Essentially, those sketches, on which other creative departments would also rely, took the place of historical reference for us," Mollo affirms. "In them the main characters were depicted in quite small scale. So our first step was to go to Berman's, the theatrical costumers, and dress models from their stock, approximating as closely as possible the appearance of the figures shown in the sketches. Then we photographed the models and showed them to George and Gary. After that it was a matter of change and adjustment until we achieved the look they wanted."

Despite the guidelines implicit in the sketches, there was no background to the characters apart from what

lay in their creator's imagination, so a constant liaison with Lucas was necessary. Since he was also directing the movie, Lucas was in England and readily available.

"In designing the costumes we had to search for ethnic clues, for derivations," says Mollo. "The characters assumed their now well-known appearance by a process of trial and error. They evolved.

"For instance, Luke Skywalker is a country boy. His outfit had to be simple and homespun, almost Spartan. Throughout the movie, except in the triumphal end sequence, Luke wore a karate-type shirt made out of cheap curtain-lining material, a waist belt, brushed-denim trousers, and foot-wrappings of vaguely Saxon influence."

Han Solo dresses more flashily. "As befits a hustler in space, there's a touch of the dude about him," says Mollo.

Likewise, Princess Leia's appearance derived from the sketches and discussions. What came about was something akin to a nun's costume, with a quasi-religious look, but it was a more practical outfit than a nun's because Leia had to leap and climb athletically in some sequences.

Mollo stresses that the costumes "evolved," though journalists have since speculated on influences and affinities. It's been said that Leia's appearance is like that of the ladies at the courts of medieval knights. "But we never consciously set out to create that effect," Mollo says. "There is no actual period influence in Leia's costume except for a vaguely medieval feel about the belt she wears. The costumes evolved from the story George Lucas had to tell."

Ben Kenobi, that shabby old desert rat of a man with surprising spiritual powers, wore clothes, to quote Mollo's phrase, "that he had obviously owned and used for a long time." So this most nonmaterialistic of men became "a cross between a Samurai and a priest."

In telling a story that is essentially romantic, clothes must be an extension of character. The fact that George

Lucas had set his tale in another galaxy couldn't alter that general rule. Yet, to some extent, Mollo's department was working in the dark.

John Mollo: "We traveled hopefully, trying this and that, talking about it, changing it, until we had achieved what was wanted. I would have been less happy if not for the accessibility at all times of the director and the producer. They knew what they were doing, and it was up to us to interpret their vision."

In space fantasy, more so than in films that deal with contemporary and historical realities, three main departments blend their work very closely—art department, make-up, and wardrobe.

"Some of the characters, especially the nonhuman ones, owe their appearance more to the art and make-up departments than to mine," Mollo says. "Or they are the result of combined efforts. That applies to R2-D2 and C-3PO. Chewbacca? Well, he results from the combined work of make-up and costume. His suit is knitted from angora wool and knotted with yak hair. It's all handmade and once, by the way, we had to thicken his hair and reknit him because in hot weather he molts. All the characters in the cantina scene were combined efforts of art, make-up, and costume. Stormtroopers were not costumed so much as armored, and this armor was designed by the art department and manufactured outside the studios. Costume-making for a *Star Wars* picture is as much a matter of gluing as it is of conventional cutting and sewing."

And space fantasy has a liberating effect.

Mollo: "In a period film you're limited by the conventions of the period. In space fantasy you're not; you can draw from any and every period. But one essential we had to convey was a convincing functionalism."

Thus liberated, John Mollo followed his *Star Wars* work with the costume design for *Alien* for which, as for other space stories, *Star Wars* had created a climate of acceptability. In October 1978 he began preparing

for *The Empire Strikes Back*, equipped with a script and some clothes left over from the original space fantasy.

"Some aspects were to remain constant," Mollo says. "The Imperial stormtroopers would be as before—faceless, authoritarian, impersonal—but with some technical refinements to their armor because we were using stronger materials developed in the years between. The pilots of the Rebel Alliance would be as they were in *Star Wars*, with their orange flying outfits and helmets. And we had new characters in the Imperial snowtroopers and Rebel snowtroopers."

Clothes for arctic conditions were to be a prime consideration for the Hoth scenes. Though both Luke and Han in essence retain their original look, they each have snow jackets for the sequences on the ice-bound planet.

The princess, too, has a snow outfit and it is in white, echoing the color and style of the original robe and hood she wore in *Star Wars* and wears again in *The Empire Strikes Back*. And in one sequence in the new picture, Leia sheds her practical look and wears a chic three-piece outfit. This outfit consists of a tunic and trousers in brown chiffon, and a cloak that is embellished with Indian embroidery.

Another task for Mollo was the designing of a costume—two costumes, in fact—for Lando Calrissian. The boss of Bespin's Cloud City, Calrissian is a good-looking extrovert with charisma and swagger. These qualities are reflected in the French-blue shirt and dashing cape he wears with darker blue trousers. In the course of the film, Lando evolves into a nicer guy, so the black costume he wears in his final scene is closer to the style favored by Han.

The wardrobe department for *The Empire Strikes Back* comprises the designer, costume supervisor, wardrobe mistress, and their assistants. They dressed the Imperial and Rebel armies, duplicated the costumes of the principals (sixteen sets of Luke Skywalker's combat outfit have been made), and serviced the daily requirements of the two units simultaneously

filming the movie. "It is a team effort," says John Mollo.

Filmmaking always is.

Thursday, July 5

Yesterday was Independence Day, but in a world short of oil, independence has a hollow ring even for Americans. Nonetheless, on July 4 we had to have something to celebrate. So at the end of the day there was a screening of some fifteen minutes of cut footage for the crew, followed by a supper party. We also saw the ninety-second trailer for the film. So many stayed for the screening that two showings were required, and there's no doubt that what we saw was received with enthusiasm by the crew.

One thing we all agreed about after watching the footage is that Harrison Ford has matured into an actor of considerable presence and power. He was not at the showing because he had flown back to California last weekend, having completed his work here.

During his final days with us, I watched several takes of the scene in which he is lowered into the carbon-freezing chamber. It is the last we see of him in the film, and it could be the last we see of Han in the saga. According to the script, Han is still alive when Boba Fett leaves Bespin with Han's deep-frozen body. So he could reappear in a future story if George Lucas writes him into one. But would Harrison Ford want to play the role of Han for a third time?

On this he would not comment, but he did say he wanted a long rest from the character. "For at least six months," he told me, "I don't want to do anything at all. I want to rest and be my own person."

Though wanting a rest from the character, Harrison does not discount his work as Han. On the contrary, he believes it to be the most demanding acting he has

ever done. When I half-seriously suggested to him that it was a one-dimensional role, he vigorously defended the character.

"Han is full-blooded," he said. "More than any of the characters he's identifiable. You can see him on the streets of cities, an urban cowboy looking for love and a meaning to things. He's wise in the ways of men but a sucker for a sacrificial end."

Han's fate in *The Empire Strikes Back* is certainly sacrificial, and watching Harrison's performance in that final scene was strangely moving. Kersh, too, was moved by the performance. "Harrison is a very fine actor," he told me. "I regarded that scene as entirely his, which is why I gave him so much opportunity to tell me how he thought we should treat it. That led to a little tension with Carrie, who thought I was giving him too much head. Professional jealousy is very healthy, incidentally, and natural. But it was his scene, and I think he handled it quite beautifully."

Stills photographer George Whitear typified the crew's reaction to last night's screening when he said that what we saw emerging is "quality *Star Wars*." "All the ingredients of the original are there, but this time you've got quality filmmaking besides," he said. "And we saw it under the worst possible conditions—think of how it's going to look with effects and music. Harrison is great, yes, but the real scene-stealer is Chewbacca. He'll become an institution. What a wonderful creation!"

Gary Kurtz: "The screenings for the crew are not really intended to give us an idea of how the film is coming together, because they're such sketchy excerpts that it's impossible to tell. The real purpose is to give the crew a sense of what the film is like. A lot of times a crew never sees a film until it's finished, and in our case we limit the daily screenings of rushes to a few key people because I really feel that's the best policy. But I think it's important the crew sees certain scenes cut together to give them an idea of how the work they're doing appears in its semi-finished state."

In other words, it was a morale booster. That's what the country as a whole needs. For with prices rising again due to new taxes and big increases in the cost of fuel, Britain, like America, is perplexed. It's the hour of the gnomes again—the pound is rocketing. If it stays as high as it is now against the dollar, \$800,000 will be added to the cost of making *The Empire Strikes Back*!

Friday, July 6

Working in ninety-degree heat wearing a fifteen-pound costume of yak wool and mohair would be fatiguing in itself, but if you also have to carry thirty-five pounds of metal on your back, it becomes a test of endurance. That is what Peter Mayhew as Chewie has been doing these past weeks while working amid the steam effects of the carbon-freezing chamber with the damaged Threepio strapped to his shoulders. Yesterday, the strain began to show. Clearly close to exhaustion, the gentle giant of a man was sent home, and he isn't in today.

At first we tried to continue Chewie's scenes on Stage 4 by using his stand-in, but the results were not the same; Peter's and Chewie's personalities have become complementary. So the action moved outside to the studio lot where on the landing-platform set we could shoot scenes of Chewie in long shot and from the rear. But not having Peter here has meant running further behind schedule.

Meanwhile, on Stage 2 work was held up because Kersh had problems with a radio-controlled R2 unit which was not emitting a satisfactory smoke screen. So, while he smoldered over the temperament of robots in general, and special-effects men wrestled with the problem, Kersh sat beside me and talked on a variety of topics that culminated in his view that the world is now in the midst of World War III—an economic

war over energy, food, and inflation. "There are going to be a lot of films that reflect this conflict," he said, "and with a background in documentaries I'm ready to move in and help interpret this huge trauma. Something's going to happen."

Just as he said this, Artoo enveloped us both in a smoke screen of spectacular density, and the director's thoughts were once again focused on the problems of the day. We were ready to shoot, but, alas, on the second take Artoo fluffed out once more. This just wasn't his day. And, as if to symbolize the havoc the unpredictable can play with planning, Robert Watts, a man who has trodden the most rugged of terrain from the tropics to the arctic regions, was on his way from the back lot to the production office when he stumbled into a hole. His injury, though not serious, required a tetanus injection.

A black hole on a black Friday? Well, not really. Just a day that had its gray areas. Holdups of this kind are helpful to me because the people I have to interview are more accessible. So I was able to chat with Mark. It seems that Mark is very aware of the responsibility he'll be under for the next several weeks, when he alone will be central to the filming.

But, in the final analysis, it is the producer who carries the heaviest responsibility and on whom the strain is toughest when delays occur. In Kurtz's case he can talk to the various specialists and crew members with a technical understanding of their problems, but that doesn't necessarily keep the costs down. Similarly, he can sympathize and attempt to uplift a temperamental or tired performer because that's all you can do when faced with an actor's inherent insecurities. It must be like playing Moses to the children of Israel at times. However, with what Kersh describes as "fillers" to do before we film Luke's fight and then move on to the bog planet, we are at least within sight of the Promised Land.

Monday, July 9

I had heard that we have an "exposition" problem, so I asked Irvin Kershner what that meant exactly.

Irvin Kershner: Exposition is setting the scene for a story and explaining its background situation. Although a story has a definite plot, there are things you have to explain in order to condition an audience. But we found that we had been too explanatory; we didn't need so much exposition. So we are compressing.

Alan Arnold: How is that accomplished?

IK: We use montage techniques. We don't stop the action and say, "Now we will tell you what the plot is about." Instead, we'll use visual exposition because verbal information can get in the way of the action. The story has to move constantly, like a piece of music.

AA: Surely, a lot can be done in the cutting room.

IK: Yes, George is doing that right now. Parts of the script needed cutting, particularly the upcoming swamp planet scenes of Luke's meeting with Yoda. It's better to cut out parts now instead of shooting more than we need. So George took the problem away to his workbench, analyzed it, and made the compressions.

AA: Are you happy about them or do you resent having his presence looming over your shoulder?

IK: I'm happy because I agreed with the compressions. Besides, George is very clever about it. He pops in and out of the set and takes a look. I've caught him looking through a camera only twice so far, and he looked at me as guiltily as if he'd stolen a cookie. So I asked him to shoot a sequence. He came up with an idea for a bridging sequence of just about fifteen seconds in duration. So I said, Go ahead and shoot it. It took him an hour and he

did sixteen takes! It's hard suddenly to come in and shoot one sequence. You're in limbo.

AA: What sequence was it?

IK: Luke putting on some flying gear while talking to a robot. It's a cute little sequence and leads to a major one. No, George doesn't stand over me. He's too considerate, and he knows the problems. I think of him as the finest assistant I could hope for, always ready, like Gary, to give advice.

AA: Is the carbon-freezing set becoming any easier?

IK: No. The plastics are dangerous, the steam is dangerous, the heights we are working on are dangerous, and things are constantly falling. Yesterday I got hit on the head with a chunk of metal. But I prepared for this film like a prizefighter. I ran two miles a day.

Tuesday, July 10

Although remarkably urbane for her years, twenty-two-year-old Carrie Fisher has a personality still in the process of forming. To survive essentially alone in a city as socially complex as London, without family ties or obligations, vulnerable to those who are drawn to celebrity like midges to a pool, one must have gumption. For all their capacity to appreciate the culture they are temporarily at home in, Americans miss some of the essential flavors of American life after a long period abroad. So, when Carrie finishes her work this weekend, I feel sure New York will beckon and that she will not linger here.

Carrie's base for the past few months has been the rented house in St. John's Wood, but she hasn't had much sense of belonging there and, in fact, where does she belong? It is something she has asked herself and has found no firm answer to. "They say it's better traveling," she tells me, somewhat resignedly.

On weekends Carrie has often been surrounded by

friends and acquaintances passing through—Penny Marshall, Rob Reiner, Treat Williams, Harvey Keitel among them—people with whom she could talk movies, play records, drink chilled white wine, or just loaf away the sterile hours between performances. Now and again she and her friends would take off for a fashionable discothèque, but most of the time they stayed in, sending out for dinner to nearby Lester's, the neighborhood bistro, or to a Chinese take-out. Only when Treat Williams visited did they do some indoor cooking. "We sent out for all kinds of groceries and Treat cooked up a storm." And when summer came they put outdoor lights on the trees surrounding the little patio and relaxed there, talking about friends and the old movies Carrie loves to see on television or at the Mayfair Theatre.

Carrie is a self-confessed night person. "I come into my own around 10:30 P.M.," she told me. British television (so much admired by Kersh for its seriousness) was too heavy for Carrie and there are no late, late movie shows. Yet, each day this week, the call sheet has included the following instructions: "Car to collect Ms. Fisher at 6:50 A.M. to arrive at the studios at 7:30 A.M." And, every day, Ms. Fisher has arrived punctually. By the week's end Princess Leia will have escaped from Cloud City. Will Carrie be able to do the same?

Wednesday, July 11

I have just come back from a visit to Dagobah. The bog planet, the last of the sets on which we shall film, is being built at a pace dictated primarily by the availability of labor, particularly plasterers who are in short supply. Skilled crew members work on a free-lance basis, and we have already lost a number of them to film productions which are only just beginning, unlike our own which is in its concluding weeks. What might

seem to be disloyalty is simply human necessity—the free-lance work force tends to go to the production that can offer it the longest period of work.

At the beginning of July we had forty full-time plasterers but now the number is down to twenty-eight, the rest having been hired by *Flash Gordon*, a film now in preparation. Because we want to start filming on the bog planet no later than August 6, it seems that yet another cliff-hanger may be in the making. We really need three times the number of plasterers we have to be ready in time.

Designer Norman Reynolds would have liked a considerably longer period in which to construct the elaborate set. He told me some weeks ago that it was really a fourteen-week construction job. Yet we only moved the *Falcon* out of the big stage a couple of weeks ago, following the dismantling of the ice hangar, and now we have only three weeks before the cameras are due to move into the new environment. My bet is that we shall begin to shoot on Dagobah on August 6 as planned, even if it means filming on a part of the set while night shifts complete the building of the remainder.

It is going to be a wonderful set, a vista of gnarled trees, some of them forty-feet tall. Luke's X-wing has crash-landed in a boggy lake deep inside this grotesque forest, and at the water's edge is the house of Yoda, the Jedi Master. Yoda's dwelling looks to me like something out of the Brothers Grimm, spiced with a touch of Irish elfinry. But all Reynolds would say about it was that it combines a host of notions and ideas he and George Lucas talked over, thought about, and tossed around. Lucas, by the way, is due to join us again this weekend and will, I am told, use the bog-planet set in connection with another chapter in the saga he is writing.

Meanwhile, Stages 4, 5, and 8 are operational today for scenes in the carbon-freezing chamber, inside the *Millennium Falcon's* hold, and in the medical center of a Rebel Star Cruiser. The call sheet requests, among several other special effects, "a falling Skylab effect,"

but on checking with the special-effects department I discovered this to be one of their little jokes. It would, of course, be quite a shock if a bit of America's space laboratory, due to crash to Earth this afternoon, actually presented itself in the special-effects department—what a story that would make!

But something not at all funny hangs over us now. It is the specter of a kidnapper. During the night Carrie's mother telephoned from Las Vegas where she is performing. It seems Debbie Reynolds has received a tip of a threat to kidnap Carrie. Today, Carrie has security guards.

However, she seemed determined this morning that all this should not hinder her concentration during her final days with us, and she plans to give a farewell party at St. John's Wood on Saturday night. Her friend, Charlie, is naturally quite nervous about this. But, when you come to think about it, the safest place to be is somewhere surrounded by close friends.

Monday, July 16

Every time I see Dave Prowse on the set, I get a vague sense of guilt. Like Tony Daniels and Kenny Baker, Dave is never seen on the screen as himself. Darth Vader belongs to the saga, not to the performer who plays him. The company hasn't exploited to any great extent these people, preferring, quite naturally, to exploit the character they play.

But Dave Prowse has the knack of exploiting himself. Hardly a week goes by without some popular newspaper or magazine carrying an item or feature about Dave's diverse activities, linking them to his role as Darth Vader. He is a man of many facets, but Dave and his personal publicity man do their best to merge them, which is fine for Dave but not always so for the image of the picture.

In addition to the gymnasium he runs, his recently published book, and his work in Harrods's sports department, Dave has recorded an LP on fitness and will soon release a smaller disc on which he will sing the keep-fit message to the backing of a pop group. But that isn't all. . . .

He is also the Green Cross Man, a giant character sponsored by the British Ministry of Transport in the interests of child safety on the roads.

Dave-Darth-Vader-Green-Cross-Man-Fitness-Is-Fun-Prowse also endorses products from low-fat spreads to dumbbells. The dumbbells Dave endorses are not simply those bars with heavy knobs on the ends used by weight lifters, but are really rather special: They are portable and designed for weight lifters who travel.

You can imagine, I assume, how difficult it is for a weight lifter to carry heavy metal dumbbells in his luggage or to stash them on the rack above a plane seat. So Dave endorses rubber ones. On arrival at the hotel one can inflate them like balloons, then fill them up with water from the bathroom tap. No day then need pass without a bit of weight lifting.

You see what I mean by Dave Prowse being a sort of mini-industry? So why the sense of guilt? It's just that every glance from Dave holds a hint of disapproval, as if to imply that he's doing my job for me, that he's a better press agent than I'll ever be, and I have to agree with him. He could have publicized this film. We'd have been splashed all over the papers time and time again. He's a space-grabber of real genius.

Tuesday, July 17

Outside the scenery doors of Stage 4, Carrie lay back on a property trolley. Sprawled in the sunshine, she cupped her hands against the light she seems to fear. She is a night-child of drawing rooms and sound-

stages, a figurine in mica, a substance that easily flakes. A vital part of the movie, she has been a constant concern to Kurtz, who has protected her as best he can, persuading her to rest well, to eat sensibly, to husband that slim resource of energy for the act of movie-making. But there are times when she looks almost fragile. What is most touching about her is the effort she makes to screen her vulnerability.

Alan Arnold: Judging by the rough-cut sequences I saw this week, it seems to me that your interest in 1930s movies has taught you a great deal about the art of facial acting.

Carrie Fisher: I don't know. You're the one who saw the close-ups. Well, I'm scared to death now. But it's true I've studied that kind of film and that style of acting. I started watching them in a professional way, and I've seen them so many times that I can see why they go from master shots to really significant close-ups.

AA: In your close-ups you look something like Mary Pickford.

CF: She was beautiful. I adore silent film. It was really a different art. Filmmakers were just about to get film perfect when sound came along. But I still think that because film is a visual medium, an actor should try to say as little as possible and use the visual effect in place of speech.

AA: Pickford went on playing teenagers into her middle age. Do you think you'll endure that long as an actress?

CF: There is not much career longevity now. Also, when films were shot in black and white there was a difference. Black and white suspends your sense of reality. You can't see the aging process so easily.

AA: Has the change in directors from George Lucas to Irvin Kershner been easy to adapt to?

CF: *Empire* is a totally different film. In the first film we had 800 opticals, but in this we have 300. So the actors have to make up for about 500 opticals. This means more emphasis on character development. *Empire* is more about the people and less about the

effects. In *Star Wars* the involvement was basically with the situation. This time the involvement is with the characters themselves.

AA: Having played Princess Leia before, did you feel that you were a better authority on the character than the director?

CF: No, I'm open to suggestion. It would be stupid to be otherwise. Leia is not a real character. She is more of a caricature, and is somewhat one-dimensional. It's not really possible to write out a list of Princess Leia's likes and dislikes. I do know her favorite color, though—it's white. She wears white all the time. But that doesn't help me much. In this film Leia develops more. Irvin Kershner directs us as actors more than George did. But in *Star Wars* George didn't really have to. There weren't as many scenes that called for character portrayal.

AA: What changes did the success of *Star Wars* bring to your life?

CF: I became more financially independent. It made me more conspicuous. It changed my name from Carrie (Debbie Reynolds's daughter) Fisher to Carrie (*Star Wars*) Fisher. I doubt that I'll be ever again involved in anything as colossally successful. So I don't think I shall have to change my middle name again.

AA: Has the film's success given you the authority to select future roles?

CF: Not at all. No one looking at me as Princess Leia with her funny hair and strange clothes could say Carrie Fisher would be perfect for this or that contemporary role.

AA: But you did diversify after *Star Wars*.

CF: Very little. There is so much more supply than demand for actresses. As for fantasy movies, well, they can easily find actresses able to function in space. I function exclusively in space, it seems to me.

AA: If you know writers, they may write with you in mind.

CF: There are still the usual channels to go through. But it's true I've met a lot of people who know about film. That may be an advantage.

AA: What about the domestic arts? Do you enjoy cooking?

CF: I took cooking lessons. As a child everything was provided for me. I had no need to learn to feed myself. I knew nothing about the basic things. I could really just scramble eggs. Now I can cook. But since I'm a vegetarian, a lot of the things I learned how to make I no longer eat.

AA: Is vegetarianism something that you arrived at by thinking?

CF: I read about it. I was a little influenced by Gary. I still eat chicken and fish.

AA: Well, you're not truly a vegetarian. But if you were to cook a meal for somebody you really liked, what would it be?

CF: I can make lasagna very well. I really have to like somebody to do that. My popovers are very good. My cooking instructor was Hungarian so I can make a lot of sweet-and-sour things. My grandmother taught me, too. I can make a great Thanksgiving dinner.

AA: Getting back to the film, did you feel in sympathy with Harrison Ford in the romantic scenes you had to play with him?

CF: Special effects gave him a very good mouth. He's very good at kissing. All actors have the opportunity of taking kissing lessons at drama school. Naturally, we all choose to do so.

AA: And how is Mark in that area?

CF: Oh, there's nothing wrong with Mark. He's cute as a deuce.

AA: But romance in space isn't the kind that lasts, is it?

CF: Well, it's like romance in the films of the thirties. It's like Fred and Ginger fighting up to the last reel; it's Bogart and Bacall, Tracy and Hepburn. This kind of romance is about two independent people,

quarreling and fighting, who then make up. It's romance in celluloid.

Wednesday, July 18

I keep saying goodbye to Carrie because each day I think she will finish and leave for home. But because she's involved in one or two retakes, she keeps popping back up on the set. However, I believe that today's farewell will be the last and that she has finally completed her work.

She was in high spirits when I saw her on Stage 2 this morning. Amid the noisy special effects, she leaped into each take with the energy of a wound-up doll. At the end of the day she hosted the crew to champagne and tacos which she had ordered for them.

Film crews appreciate gestures of this kind. To the plasterers, riggers, carpenters, and painters, a player's talents are secondary; it's the common touch that counts. A performer's loyalty must be to his coworkers whatever the pressures. Carrie knows this. For all her mothlike restlessness, her kinetic energy, this kind of loyalty is in her blood. I believe in her potential as an actress, and I think she has a serious side yearning to break out. Born into show business, it came naturally to her to say her last farewells to the workers on the floor.

She had already given a party for closer associates on Saturday. On that warm evening, I arrived at St. John's Wood to find a crush of people, but there was a patio where one could be more relaxed. I sat with Kersh and others in the still air as Carrie moved wispily from group to group, settling momentarily like a feather becalmed.

The talk was about films and film people, and I soon grew tired of it. With no zest for the society of movie folk, needing simpler friends, I squeezed through

the crowded room again, passed Marilou Hamill carrying her baby shoulder high like a Masai leaving a waterhole, passed security men unconvincingly disguised as barmen, and moved out into the leafy grove to make my way home.

On arrival I was greeted with gentle reproach. Only a Siamese cat can express possessiveness with such dignity. And he had the good grace not to talk films.

Thursday, July 19

When someone tells you he has put everything he owns into an enterprise and that if it doesn't succeed he'll be millions of dollars in debt, what are you to say? When he adds: "I'm willing to take that risk because I started with nothing. Five years ago I had nothing," all you can feel is humility, which is what I felt when George Lucas talked to me today.

In a world that pays mainly lip service to principles, when politicians are so partisan and the language so convoluted (priests now talk of "do-gooding" with disdain), it is refreshing to sense integrity in the air again—and talk with a man who puts his money where his dreams lie. I was looking forward to my interview with him.

George Lucas: This is my third trip to London for *Empire*. I see the dailies in the United States on videotape, and I'm constantly talking to Kersh and Gary over the phone.

The first thing I do when I arrive here is catch up on the cut film. Because of the time pressure, my main concern at this point is to work on the second cut while the editor works on the first cut. That way, when we get finished, we can be six weeks ahead of ourselves.

Kersh is worrying primarily about the specific moment or scene he has to deal with, and what I'm constantly keeping my eye on is the whole

picture and how it's all fitting together. But one of my primary concerns is special effects, because that part is the trickiest. That's where I think my experience on the first film will be of most use. It's the area, in addition to the editing, where I can contribute most effectively.

Alan Arnold: Did the sets, when you saw them, relate satisfactorily to what you'd conceived of as a writer?

GL: Some did, some didn't. Ralph McQuarrie, Joe Johnston, and I worked on the designs and the paintings of the sets and then turned them over to Kersh, Gary, and Norman Reynolds. When I was over here on the first two trips, I sort of monitored the sets and put in my two cents worth, but the designers went off on their own interpretations. The designs are fairly close to my conception, but there are differences, some of which are improvements.

AA: It must be a curious experience for a writer to see what he has written translated from words into an actual physical state.

GL: It's a very interesting experience. This is only the second of my pictures that I haven't directed [*More American Graffiti* (1979) was the first]. It has been a unique experience to write down something the way I thought it should be, explain to the director how it was supposed to be done, describe the ambience, and then have it come out completely different from the way I'd thought of it. It's an interesting experience, and I can now see why screenwriters go crazy.

AA: What causes these differences in interpretation?

GL: It's caused by the fact that no two people are the same, and no two people see with the same eyes. I can know exactly how something should be, but somebody else will have a completely different point of view. It's like describing an accident after it happens. Five people can see the same accident, but each will describe it a different way. Similarly, the

nuances in a script, no matter how articulate it is, can go in so many directions.

AA: Surely, as a writer, the translation to film cannot always come up to your expectations.

GL: Well, sometimes. But that happened more on the first film than on this one. With *Empire*, since I am a step away from it, I didn't expect as much, yet it's turning out much more like I imagined than did the first one. I had much higher expectations of the first film, and we were working under much greater duress.

I think Kershner is feeling similar to the way I felt on the first film; he feels that it's not coming up to his expectations. When you're on the set, trying to get things to happen each day, while everything's falling apart around you—the robot won't move or some technical thing malfunctions—then you're compromising day by day and dying a thousand deaths.

On this picture I haven't seen all the suffering. I've just looked at the film and said, "Oh, that's turned out great" or "That scene could have been a little better," but I wasn't there watching Kersh suffer, struggling to *get* it better.

AA: It must be a relief to have a quality craftsman at work, though.

GL: These films are incredibly difficult to make. Normally, a director is concerned mainly with character and with telling a story. In the *Star Wars* films that is important, but equally important are all the details. They're like little time bombs all over the set, thousands of them, and if you don't catch one, it could do you in. When the shot moves around and there's some little thing that isn't right, it could take the audience completely out of the movie. In a normal film there isn't that thin edge. Reality, the reality of the world we know, is a tangible presence in most films. The viewer is there, it's real. But in a film like this, where we're creating a world that doesn't exist, it's very easy to puncture a viewer's sense of reality by a missing or wrong detail.

AA: It must be easier now for you to know your way around the worlds you created.

GL: Yes, it was harder on the first film. I didn't quite know the world that was being created. It was very hazy to start with, but as it became clearer, more concrete, I had a stronger base of reality to work with. It was, so to speak, the reality of unreality. But now I know what Luke Skywalker looks like; I know how lightsabers work; I know what Darth Vader's appearance should be. On the first film I didn't really know all these things. Should Luke be a young intellectual or just a crazy kid? Should Darth Vader be big and tall? How does Han Solo react to danger? That sort of thing. Those decisions, and hundreds more, were made before and during the first picture.

AA: Therefore, perhaps, this film should have been simpler to make than the first.

GL: I don't think you can use the word simpler. These films are exceptionally complicated. In terms of the script, the magnitude of the two pictures is fairly similar. There are a few more sets on this one but not that many more. The locations are about the same in terms of the amount of time spent on them and the proportion of the film they'll fill in screen time. No, the advantage this film has over the first relates to the fact that the crew knows what kind of film we are making, as well as the fact that a lot of them worked on the first film. They know more what to expect, how to do things, whereas on the first film we were experimenting all the time.

AA: Then why has *Empire* taken longer to make?

GL: People work in different ways. That has a lot to do with it. In order to finish shooting in seventeen weeks—which is what it took to shoot *Star Wars*—you have to push very hard. Sometimes that is very difficult, and it depends on who is doing the pushing. Somebody's got to do it.

AA: I said to Kersh the other day that he's a director who changes his mind at the last moment.

GL: That takes up time.

AA: But I don't think he's notoriously equivocal, do you?

GL: No, we hired him because his reputation is one of being a fast director. And a very good one. I just don't think he's come up against anything quite so complicated before. You reach a point where it's so big that it's very hard to keep hold of.

AA: So you felt the need to make this one bigger and better than the first.

GL: I don't think we're trying to make it bigger. We're obviously trying to make everything better. I think we're just trying to make it as good as the first one. If we can get that far, I'll be happy.

AA: Does the fact that you're not directing have its satisfactions, or do you sometimes wish you were?

GL: Generally, I enjoy *not* directing. It's a great relief and a lot of pressure off me. That is the good side. I'm not nearly as emotionally distressed as I'd be if I were directing. Once in a while, when I'm on the set, I get a little restless as if I were directing, wishing I could go in there and get it done. I like what Kersh is doing creatively. I don't have a strong feeling of wishing it were being done another way (well, perhaps once in a while), and I much prefer that somebody else do the work.

AA: If you were directing, do you think you could speed up the process?

GL: I think I could.

AA: Do your new business interests conflict with creative matters?

GL: I don't know whether they conflict. To operate a large corporation I've moved into the business world, which is a new experience and one I'm learning from and enjoy. I get another perspective, and although there are worries I didn't have before, they don't conflict with other things.

AA: Do the worlds and the characters take you over and begin to write themselves, in a sense?

GL: Yes. The first script was just murder to write, just awful. It took me two years. Most of it was simply finding my way through that world. Now

I'm much more immersed in the world. When I did the story for the second film, it was easier because it's really part of the *Star Wars* story. The first script was one of six original stories I had written in the form of two trilogies.

After the success of *Star Wars* I added another trilogy. So now there are nine stories. The original two trilogies were conceived of as six films of which the first film was number four.

AA: So the stories became easier to write.

GL: Yes, the stories became easier. The problem was coming up with the scenes and making the scenes work. Sometimes what I had in mind in the story didn't always work dramatically. That's where the real struggle comes. I hired Leigh Brackett to write the screenplay, but tragically she died right after completing the first draft. Faced with the situation that somebody had to step in and do a rewrite, I was forced to write the second draft of this screenplay. But I found it much easier than I'd expected, almost enjoyable. It still took me three months to do, but that's a lot different from two years. I also had the advantage of Larry Kasdan coming in later to do a rewrite and fix it up.

AA: Among the new creations in the movie is one of the oddest the saga has yet introduced—Yoda. What are your feelings about him?

GL: He's been a great concern right from the beginning. I started designing Yoda with Joe and Ralph. We worked for about four months before coming up with a design we liked. You can see the progression from Joe's drawings to Ralph's paintings, see the character's look improving, acquiring more personality, until, I think, Yoda is now how we want him to be.

AA: Well, we'll meet him soon when we begin to shoot on the swamp planet of Dagobah. Are you going to use that set for the next movie, too?

GL: Dagobah does appear in the next film. What we'd hoped to do was shoot the set now, having built it, to save having to build it up again. But time

has gotten so tight that we really can't do that now. We're just going to have to wait and rebuild the set for the next picture.

AA: Does that worry you?

GL: Well, yes. I'm faced with a situation where everything I own, everything I ever earned, is wrapped up in this picture. If it isn't a success not only could I lose everything, but I could also end up being millions of dollars in debt which would be very difficult to get out from under. It would probably take me the rest of my life just to get back even again. That worries me. Everybody says, "Oh, don't worry, the film will be a huge success" and I'm sure it will be, but if it is just one of those mildly successful film sequels, I'd lose everything. It has to be the biggest grossing sequel of all time for me to break even.

AA: You've always acted on that kind of faith, haven't you?

GL: Well, most of this filmmaking effort is so I can create a dream, a dream I've had for a long time, which is to build a research retreat for film. The amount of money needed to develop a facility like that is so enormous that the money I have doesn't amount to anything. You need millions and millions of dollars to build such an operation. The only way I can do it is to create a company that will generate profits.

There's a world of difference between the money-making abilities of corporations and those of individuals. For an individual to make two or three million dollars is a big deal. He'd feel very wealthy and secure. But most corporations have to make thirty or forty million dollars a year in order to feel secure. No matter how much money I make individually, I don't think I'd ever have enough to compete on a corporate level. To take care of just the overhead of a company, to pay all the employees every year, costs several million dollars. I couldn't direct enough films fast enough to pay for all those people. So I had to develop a company.

AA: Although you've diversified, the *Star Wars* films are at the heart of it all.

GL: Yes, they are the core, which is why I have to concentrate on them. I don't want to spend the rest of my life making *Star Wars* pictures, but I do want to get them set up so that they'll operate properly without my having to get completely involved in all of them. They've got to be self-generating to support the facility.

AA: So it's vital that *Empire* be successful.

GL: It's important that this film have the quality of the first one so it doesn't look as though we are skimping, which is what a good many sequels have done. I want people to realize we put the highest quality in every picture, that the quality's not going to drop. That's the challenge.

AA: Escalation of cost seems to be a disease in moviemaking on this scale.

GL: The problem is that pictures of this kind are very difficult to make. I can't stress that enough. The number of people involved, the amount of materials involved, the decision-making that costs money every day—all these are horrendous compared with a normal movie. It's logistically and technically so complicated that if you don't know what you're doing you can get into deep trouble very quickly. Fortunately, on the special-effects side, which is where *Star Trek* and *Black Hole* got into trouble, we're very secure. At ILM I have extremely good people working for me. They know exactly what I want, and they do a terrific job. I have control over the special effects, so I feel confident that we're not going to be in trouble there. The only problem I have now is the speed of the production. That's the only thing that's costing us any more money. Otherwise, everything is going along very well.

AA: What has been your reaction to the many imitations of *Star Wars*?

GL: It was to be expected. I don't mind imitation. It is a form of flattery, but I do object to outright copying that tries to convince the public that this

or that is part of the *Star Wars* saga. I think that is very, very wrong. There's a line between just doing something similar and doing something that is trying to copy directly.

AA: Do you find that there is always a conflict between cost and quality in filmmaking?

GL: Yes, and I feel that the quality of the film we're making now is as good as the first film. The issue is always one of time and money. On *Star Wars* I had a tendency to use only what I needed, and since nobody realized the movie's potential, they only gave me what I needed. Now the expectations are higher. So when Kersh asks for something, he gets a little more than he asks for, and it's that little more that translates into millions of dollars.

AA: Can you put a stop to it?

GL: It's not something you can stop. I'm sort of half-businessman, half-filmmaker right now and I get very concerned, even more than Gary, because as executive producer I'm paying for it. The director worries about making the movie and doesn't have to care about any of the other things. Well, I care very strongly. Unless you've got somebody at the helm on a day-to-day level trying to cut everything down, it just doesn't happen. Gary is trying but, ultimately, Kersh is the one in the driver's seat, and he just isn't of the same school as I am. It's understandable. Most directors aren't. They're concerned about making movies, not about saving money. They just want to do the best job they possibly can and make the film as good as possible—which is what they're paid to do.

AA: It's why you must at moments feel you want to get in there and direct the picture yourself.

GL: There's not much I can do. I can help Kersh when he lays out a scene, which is the same sort of thing that Gary's been trying to do. I think Kersh is doing a great job. I had a time problem on the first film, too. It took seventeen weeks but we had been scheduled for thirteen which admittedly was impossible. But I'm used to making films in a much

shorter time. *American Graffiti* was made in twenty-eight days. I'm not used to everything going as slowly as it does. It has a tendency to drive me crazy, although not so much on this picture as on the first, despite the fact that I have infinitely more at stake in this one.

AA: Time is money in any situation, but in the film business it's such big money.

GL: Most directors can make a technically good movie if they have enough time and money. There is a theory that monkeys could be Picassos given enough paint and allowed to go with it long enough. They'd duplicate all Western art. In movies, give somebody \$150 million and fifty years to make a film, and the odds are good that they'll make a professional movie. The real challenge is to do it for a minimum amount of money in a reasonable amount of time. When I look at films I can tell one that cost \$30 million, but if you can make a film that looks as good but only cost \$15 million, then you've accomplished something.

AA: Francis Ford Coppola was indulged on *Apocalypse Now*, wasn't he?

GL: He indulged himself. I was going to make that picture for \$2 million; he made it for over \$30 million. It could have been done in a year; he took four. *Apocalypse* cost so much money, much more than the picture we're doing now, that it simply doesn't make economic sense. And I worry about breaking even! Our chances are ten times better than his. If I were Francis, I'd be extremely worried.

AA: You're saying that talent shouldn't be pampered in this way.

GL: I believe in discipline. I believe you must learn your craft. The craft of filmmaking is very difficult, very technical, and very involved. I become impatient with people who aren't the best craftsmen, who don't know their job, who aren't really on top of things. I appreciate professionalism. I feel strongly that it's the absolute foundation of directing. In whatever kind of film you're talking about

there is the content, the art, and the craft. The craft is getting your work done on time every day, getting all the stuff you need, overcoming the adversities. It's like being a gladiator and having to go into the ring each day. You have no idea whether you're going to go up against three men, one giant man, or two lions. Every day there are impossible problems. And one of the first things you learn at film school is that there are no rules. Filmmaking is making the impossible happen every day, and there are no excuses.

AA: You continue to suggest a division within yourself, between the artist and the practical man, the craftsman and the dreamer.

GL: Yes, I have two sides, one creative and one practical, but I separate them. I accept and enjoy my practical side. It doesn't get in the way of creativity; it is a part of it.

People have said my films have no content, but the truth is they have much more content than most critics realize. People usually don't look beyond the surface of pure entertainment. For a film to be thought of as having content, it must have spelled out in bold letters, "Look at the content."

AA: Putting yourself at risk financially may be a good creative discipline.

GL: My nature is to do everything myself. I like to be the editor, the cameraman, the art director, and so on. Inside, I'm simply a craftsman and if I weren't a filmmaker I'd probably be a painter or a cabinetmaker.

AA: I've thought of you as a toymaker, if not a puppeteer.

GL: I remember George Cukor saying to me once, "You refer to yourselves as filmmakers. I don't like the word filmmaker. I'm a director. A filmmaker is like being a toymaker." I replied that a director sounds like somebody who runs a business. I'd rather be a toymaker.

My inclination is to make my own films. At first I was able to do that. I made films using very small

crews. If something went wrong in the art department, I would just go fix it myself. On *Star Wars* I couldn't do that. I tried to be in complete control, to do everything myself, but it almost killed me. It was just too difficult and I was miserable because I agonized over things not turning out my way. But I had to step back. If I were ever going to create on that scale again, I told myself, I would have to do it through others. That isn't easy.

AA: Do you ever wish you'd let it stop at *Star Wars*?

GL: At first I was contemplating selling the whole thing to Fox to do whatever they wanted with it. I'd just take my percentage and go home and never think about *Star Wars* again. But the truth of it is I got captivated by the thing. It's in me now. And I can't help but get upset or excited when something isn't the way it's supposed to be. I can see that world. I know the way the characters live and breathe. In a way, they have taken over.

AA: So you decided to continue the saga.

GL: When I was in film school, I was into a very abstract kind of filmmaking. I want to get back to it. Which brings me again to the research center. That is really the core of my drive to make this work. Movies cost a lot of money. You can't just go out and make them, no matter how rich you are. You have to devise a mechanism, a funding machine that will allow you to make movies. Nobody has been able to accomplish this very well except by means of government subsidies. In the U.S. there are few subsidies. Not even the studios have the money to finance films without concern for their commerciality. So, I learned the system and I beat it. Now I want to use it to make the kind of films I'm interested in, regardless of their commerciality.

Monday, July 23

I have been talking to a man who has been in 5,000 fights during the past thirty years and can boast of never having broken a bone. "I've never been injured or needed a single stitch," Peter Diamond told me, but I was relieved to note that he knocked on wood.

Peter is the movie's stunt coordinator, the position he also held on *Star Wars*, but he is a man whose appearance and personality don't suggest a daredevil. His middle age, less-than-average height, comfortable plumpness, balding pate, and outfit of track suit and sneakers suggest a soccer coach or a businessman back from a jog.

Apart from stunt coordinating and performing several stunts himself, Peter arranged the intricate duel sequence between Darth Vader and Luke, tutored Mark in the art of fencing, and worked out every movement in the duel with choreographic precision.

I asked Peter if it needed a lot of courage to be a stuntman.

"Often it takes the courage to say no," he told me. "I've always felt that if you honestly think you can't do a certain stunt—that it could injure you or even cause your death—you must have the courage to say so."

That sounded reasonable, but when Peter told me what he'd done—quite apart from those 5,000 fights—I began to wonder what job offers he had turned down! "I've hung from planes, fallen under trains, and been thrown from countless horses. I've tumbled down numerous flights of stairs. I've had chairs and bottles and tables smashed over my head. I've swung on ropes and fallen out of buildings."

You see what I mean. Personally, I can't even *look* down from a high window.

So what is courage? I think of it as doing what you fear to do.

"You evaluate but you don't rush," said Peter. "You calculate to the last detail. The greatest stunt I ever witnessed was a 200-foot fall from a helicopter, but this same stuntman was recently killed doing a similar fall from a higher altitude. He hadn't calculated correctly."

I suggested to Peter that flirtation with danger seems to be on the increase, that the Evel Knievels of this world are proliferating. I was especially conscious of this because a would-be Knievel had just destroyed himself while attempting a motorcycle leap over several London double-deck buses at a nearby airfield. Another youngster had pledged to survive a leap from a plane flying at 1,000 feet, a trick from which, happily, he was dissuaded.

"There are lots of deluded kids around," Peter agreed. "I can't stress too strongly that to be successful in this game you must calculate the risks involved. I fail to see why anybody should risk his life for entertainment, but when big money is the lure, the rules are sometimes disregarded."

Peter began his professional life as a fencing master but studied acting, too, and eventually combined the two skills as a stuntman in fight scenes. He also knows a lot about floor effects because in scenes involving explosions, his life depends on a liaison with the special-effects men.

"Let's face it," said Peter. "The stuntman is expendable but a principal actor or actress is not."

Wednesday, July 25

Since the filming of *The Empire Strikes Back* began, some basic materials used in set construction have shot up in price twenty to thirty percent, construction manager Bill Welch tells me. When you're spending

something like four million dollars on building the sets, the inflation factor is a serious one. Welch is in favor of spending a quarter of a million dollars now to buy a reserve of materials for the making of the third film in the saga.

Welch is a big-time shopper. For the Dagobah set alone, he required 112 tons of plaster just to make the twenty-four giant trees and 48,000 meters of scrim to hold the plaster together. For that set, too, he needed 350 steel worktops which would raise the scenery three feet off the ground to allow for a lake.

Another big shopper is Frank Bruton, head of the property department, who has bought or scrounged thousands of props for the picture. For example, he bought an old V-8 engine and broke it up into hundreds of useful items to furnish sets in space. "If we can't give a name to something we call it a 'greebly,'" he told me. "Greebly is a word George Lucas coined on *Star Wars* for something you can't otherwise define."

Friday, July 27

Talking again with George Lucas.

Alan Arnold: You grew up in the California of the 1950s. Do you feel a deep sense of having roots there?

George Lucas: The environment I grew up in was very secure. It has a lot to do with the way I think.

AA: I also lived in America through the fifties into the early sixties. It seemed to me to be a period of comfortable lull. Did you feel that in California?

GL: California is always in more of a lull than the rest of the country. In the fifties I was not very aware of the events that were going on around me. It wasn't until Kennedy was killed that I became involved in a lot of things that I hadn't paid too much attention to before.

AA: Is that when you began to see the immediate past as a significant period?

GL: Yes. In *American Graffiti* I was trying to portray change. I was trying to say that things are always changing and that change is inevitable. That's why I backed the film up against a radical change in American culture. In a way the film was a study. I'm very interested in anthropology and social psychology and in the way cultures work. I was trying to parallel historical shifting with growing up. When you're nineteen or twenty years old and you leave home, it is a giant change in your life. The story of *Graffiti* is based on the premise, which is a line in the film, that you can't stay seventeen forever. It's a very simple idea but a significant one and a rather tragic fact of life. I was trying to portray the rituals of American teenagers which, as far as I knew, had never before been accurately documented on film. I'm referring to the whole concept of "cruising," which was the main way boys met girls apart from school. It's a major American ritual.

AA: Was it a ritual you took part in yourself?

GL: Yes.

AA: At what point did you decide to go to film school?

GL: Well, I started out wanting to be a painter, but I was also very interested in cars. I worked as a mechanic and raced cars, but I got into a bad accident and realized that I wasn't going to be a Stirling Moss. I was going to have to figure out something else to do if I didn't want to be a car mechanic. So I decided to go to junior college which was fairly easy to get into—I hadn't done too well in high school. In my first two years I majored in social sciences and anthropology.

AA: Did you always write?

GL: No. I hate writing—I've always hated it. Never was very good at it. When it came to having to make a decision about what university to go to, a very close friend of mine said, "Why don't you apply to the University of Southern California; that's

where I'm going." I asked what I would do there. He said the film department was real easy. But what I really wanted to do was to go to art school. My father, however, was very much against it. He didn't want me to become a painter. He said you can go to art school, but you'll have to pay your own way. Aware, I think, that I'm basically a lazy person, he knew I wouldn't go to art school if I had to work my way through. In the meantime, I had been getting more involved in still photography, taking photographs of racing cars, and I was intrigued with it. So I went to USC.

AA: Were you very active in the movements of the sixties?

GL: I went to marches, but I wasn't an instigator of anything.

AA: Did you get the feel of change, of liberation in the sixties?

GL: The sixties were amazing. I was in college and was just the right age. I guess everybody who lived through that period felt a very strong sense that something special was happening. Everybody hoped it would continue but, as in *Graffiti*, it passed. Everything changes.

AA: Are you hopeful that there might be a return to the spirit of the sixties?

GL: Well, it's sort of useless to want a return to another era. It just won't happen. I hope things will get better. I hope that we come up with a higher quality of leadership.

AA: In *American Graffiti* you were looking back on the immediate past. What caused you to step aside from social comment to the pure entertainment of *Star Wars*?

GL: I had always been interested in outer space and science fiction. Through anthropology I had gotten interested in folklore and mythology and in their role as an anchor for societies. I came to realize that America has no modern fairy tales. You could say that the Western movie is the last of our myths. I feel that young people need some

kind of fantasy life. Essentially, folklore is a very simple form of teaching.

In the earliest times it was the father who taught the young the way to live: this is the way you get your food or your mate; this is the way you greet somebody or know how you fit into things. The father taught the social conventions, how they work, how to behave in society. Then organized religion became the father figure. It said this is the way to live your life, this is right and this is wrong; this is the way you treat people. But I feel with religion losing its influence over the young, television is becoming the major teaching force. But television has no central core, and is amoral. It confuses young people. In *Star Wars* I was striving to make a strong positive statement. My first film [THX-1138] was a parable about the way we are living our lives today. I realize it was a rather depressing statement. People really weren't interested in a depressing statement. Being a pessimist doesn't seem to accomplish anything.

I looked at THX and said if I wanted to change the world, it was no use saying how awful our society is or how stupid. The way to make things progress is to point people in the right direction, to show how wonderful life can be. Tearing things down, being pessimistic makes people simply accept the conditions that prevail. Whereas if you give them hope and point them in the right direction, things are more likely to get better.

In the sixties the vogue in literature and film was to lift the carpet and see the ugly side of life and say how awful and despicable human beings are. I realize there's a place for that. But I don't think it has much of an effect on society.

AA: *Star Wars* became something of a social phenomenon, particularly in America, almost with religious overtones. Are you religious? Did you have a religious upbringing?

GL: My parents sent me to Sunday school and when I got to be old enough, twelve or thirteen, I

rebelled against it. When I was in college, I got religiously involved again for a couple of years, more experimentally. I've always been curious, academically, about organized religion. I have strong feelings about God and the nature of life, but I'm not devoted to one particular faith.

AA: Were you thinking of something with a built-in sense of values when approaching *Star Wars*?

GL: I was trying to design a modern fairy tale. I wanted it to have a strong moral basis designed to teach young people and give them a perspective; I wanted to give them a fantasy life they could act out and use, as traditional fairy tales have been used by society for thousands of years. It started with the idea of good and evil, which is found in most fairy tales.

AA: It has been said that you used market research, computer technology in your approach.

GL: It wasn't market research. When I've said I did a lot of research, people immediately thought of market research. But it was actually an extension of my research into fairy tales, folklore, and organized religion. It was study rather than research that I put together to make the film. I didn't say to myself, What do people want now? What's going to sell? It wasn't approached that way at all.

Wednesday, August 1

Yesterday's difficult shot of Luke falling from the ledge below Cloud City into the infinities of space has been ruined in the laboratory. It will have to be reshot.

Kurtz explained to me what happened: "A stoppage in the processing bath ruined a roll of film. In the developing and bleaching process film is fed through continuously in long rolls. A stoppage is caused by a bit of film breaking. When that occurs, and it's rare,

they try to pick up the tear and splice it back together so it doesn't damage any more film. In our case, they didn't succeed and we lost the whole sequence."

"Mark did the stunt himself, didn't he?"

"Yes. It was the most important shot we did yesterday. It was hard enough to get Mark to go out there since the ledge was so high, although we had cardboard boxes below for him to land on."

Peter Diamond said it was not an easy fall, even for a stuntman. According to Peter, Mark is doing ninety-five percent of all his own stunts himself. "He's a plucky young fellow," he added.

Understandably, a producer anxious to get the shots takes a less sentimental view. "We had to have Mark do most of that stunt," said Kurtz. "He stood out on the ledge, spoke the lines, and jumped. Because the fall is so specialized, the first part of it was done by a double. Even with boxes, we didn't want Mark to try that."

Another unforeseeable dilemma is that unauthorized stills from the movie are appearing in American science-fiction and movie magazines, according to Lucasfilm's publicity and advertising chief, Sidney Ganis, who has telexed urging us to stop issuing this material. The fact is, they aren't coming from here.

"Are stills circulating out of our control?" I asked Kurtz.

"No, not at all. Sid had seen some color stills reproduced, but they came out of the film's teaser trailer. Very annoying. People in the labs take away reject prints and sell them at up to \$30 apiece. They make, say, a run of 1,500 from which there are fifty or sixty prints that aren't top quality. They salvage these and sell them. The quality is poor, the profit high. It happens all the time. You can go to underground bookstores, specialized sci-fi or movie-type bookstores, and find thousands of such stills, even whole trailers or clips from promotional material, on sale to the public. They sell for a lot of money. We try to kill the black

market by making reasonably priced material available through our own fan club."

"Would such stills have a black-market value here?" I asked Fred Zentner, who runs The Cinema Bookshop, located opposite the British Museum.

"We tend to be a lot less fanatic than America's West Coast about these things," he told me. "Britain's movie-stills collectors, who are growing in number, tend to collect stills from the 1920s and 1930s. They pay top money for original stills from movies by Chaplin, the Marx Brothers, W.C. Fields, and Garbo. There are also big cult followings for stills of Marilyn Monroe and James Dean. Valentino still has a fan club here that buys anything I can obtain. Stills by Clarence Sinclair Bull and George Hurrell, the stillsmen who photographed the MGM stable of stars in the 1930s, are the most prized of all. A fourteen-by-eleven-inch print in good condition on the original paper by either of these photographers will fetch up to £250."

So far, the stillsmen on *The Empire Strikes Back* have shot 24,000 color stills and 22,000 in black and white. It may be a long while before these stills achieve archival value.

Friday, August 3

George Lucas has no room of his own at these studios. No sign on any door confirms his presence here. One comes upon him by chance as he moves with a purposeful itinerary from task to task. He spends much time in the cutting room, but I found him this morning in Kersh's room absorbed in redrawing the storyboard for the Dagobah sequences. There is absolutely no image of tycoonery about this filmmaker. On the set he merges with the work force dressed, as they are, in plaid shirts and denims. During the lunch break he's to be seen at the lunch table with his close associates—Gary Kurtz, Paul Hirsch, and Kersh.

Following Lucas's lunch today, we took up the story again.

Alan Arnold: What was the situation of the film industry in California when you were trying to get *Star Wars* made?

George Lucas: The industry was doing fairly well at the time. Fox had *The Towering Inferno*, Universal had *Jaws*. I'd done *American Graffiti* for Universal, which was a hit, so things were opening up. But it was not like it is today. In those days a \$10 million budget was something very exceptional. Now, it seems, practically everything costs at least ten million and really big films, far more.

AA: So at the time you were looking for a studio to invest in *Star Wars*, the situation in Hollywood was one of mild prosperity. How did you proceed?

GL: Let's go back to where it originally started because for a long time I'd wanted to do a space fantasy, even before I made the deal to develop *American Graffiti*. I'd been trying to make the *Graffiti* deal with United Artists for nearly a year without getting anywhere. My agent was dealing with the West Coast people, but realizing that it was David Picker (then president of United Artists) who really headed the company, I decided to take my last two thousand dollars and fly to the Cannes Film Festival where *THX* was being shown. On my way there, I stopped off in New York where Picker was based. Well, he said he was interested but said we could talk more at Cannes. So I went to the festival and it was there that he said he'd give me the money to write the script. At the same time he asked if there was anything else I wanted to do, and I told him I wanted to do this space-fantasy film. So he said UA would make a two-picture deal with me. Later, though, UA decided not to do *Graffiti*, so I took it to Universal.

After *Graffiti* I went back to United Artists and said, "Well, I'm ready to do the second film now, the space fantasy." This was before *American Graffiti* was released and so I was still an unknown quant-

ity. UA felt the fantasy film would be a very big picture and didn't want to do it.

Back to Universal. I had to take the project there because in order to do *Graffiti* I had to sign an option agreement with them. But they weren't interested, either. If I'd had my choice, without this option, I would have gone to Fox first because I thought it was the best studio for the project. Because of *Planet of the Apes*, which Fox had done, it seemed to me that studio knew what science fantasy was. And so finally I went to Fox and showed the project to Laddie (Alan Ladd Jr., then president of Twentieth Century-Fox) and he liked it.

AA: Did Fox give you money to work on the screenplay?

GL: Yes. I needed that development money because I was in debt after *Graffiti*, and I wanted to pay off some of those debts. I was given \$10,000 to write the script, and it took me two years to do it.

AA: Eventually, of course, *Graffiti* was going to pay its own debts.

GL: In the end, yes. When *Graffiti* came out and was a big hit my financial problems were solved.

AA: But, until *Graffiti* came out, you were working creatively on *Star Wars* when debts were all around you. That must have been nerve-racking.

GL: I had gotten used to working that way. It had been the same with *THX*, which had taken me three years to write, develop, and make.

AA: Did that film make *any* money?

GL: No. My salary to write, direct, and edit the whole picture was only about \$15,000 which works out to \$5,000 a year over three years. Not very much to live on. The development money to write the screenplay for *Graffiti* was only about \$10,000, and that took two-and-a-half years to do. I had very little money while developing *Graffiti* and no other job outside a little free-lance work such as some optical work I did on *The Godfather*. It's hard to live on that kind of money, and I was constantly

falling a couple of thousand dollars in the red. In fact, I got to be six or seven thousand dollars in debt, and it was my wife who kept us going. It was a most desperate time before *Graffiti* paid off. I'd been in debt for so long that the strain was beginning to take its toll.

AA: If you'd gotten a good job offer then, would you have abandoned the project in favor of the opportunity to make some money?

GL: After *THX*, to tell the truth, I didn't get many job offers. As a San Francisco filmmaker, I was very much out of touch with the Hollywood industry and actually was not that interested. But at a most difficult point I *did* get a job offer. A writer wanted me to direct a movie he'd written. I said no, explaining that I was working on my own project, but the producers kept bugging me, offering me more and more money, until they were offering me \$100,000 to direct the picture. But I still said no. It was a turning point. If I had said yes, I would have abandoned *Graffiti* and I would probably be nowhere today.

AA: What was the film?

GL: *Lady Ice*. It was a disaster.

AA: I think that was an astonishing decision. Like the decision you made much later not to hand over your interest in *Star Wars* but continue the saga, it suggests to me that faith is your strongest motivation.

GL: I have a lot of faith in my *films*, at least. I'm convinced that they're going to be interesting or I wouldn't be doing them. And I know that I'll like them. Once I decide I am going to do something, I just don't let anything stop me. No matter what, I just plow forward.

AA: Was your wife, Marcia, a support in the difficult times?

GL: Oh, yes, she was. When I was writing *Star Wars* she was editing for Marty Scorsese, so we had separate careers, but she was giving us the financial support I needed to carry on.

AA: She believed in it.

GL: Yes.

AA: Where were you living?

GL: After I left USC Marcia and I were married and moved to San Francisco where we rented a tiny house in Mill Valley. It was a very small house, but we lived there for about five years.

AA: At what stage did Gary Kurtz become a professional associate?

GL: We first met when I was cutting *THX*. I had shot the film in Techniscope and was cutting it on a Steenbeck editing machine which was then still fairly rare in the U.S. Gary came up from L.A. with Monte Hellman (director of *Two-Lane Blacktop*) because they were thinking about shooting *Two-Lane Blacktop* in Techniscope. They wanted to see what the process was like, and to see the Steenbeck which was in the attic of my house in Mill Valley.

Gary and I found that we had a lot in common, including the background of USC. Francis Coppola thought that Gary might be the right person to be the line producer for my next film, *Apocalypse Now*, as it was a war film and Gary had been a sergeant in the Marines. So, we started to do *Apocalypse* together, but as it happened Francis couldn't get the financing and I had to put it aside.

It was after I'd talked to United Artists in Cannes and thought I'd made the deal for *Graffiti* that I told Gary I wasn't going to do *Apocalypse* but *Graffiti*, a sort of hot-rod movie. As he'd just done a hot-rod movie (*Two-Lane Blacktop*), I asked if he would like to work for me, and he agreed. We got along on *Graffiti* so I asked him to come and do the next picture, *Star Wars*.

AA: You two are very different in personality, but I think one thing you have in common is a lack of interest in the tinsel side of Hollywood.

GL: Yes. I don't have much to do with Hollywood and that whole world down there.

AA: Returning to *Star Wars* and the successful approach to Fox, how did things develop then?

GL: I made the deal to write the screenplay and started work. Then *Graffiti* came out and was a big hit. All the wonderfully crazy things that follow such a success were quite distracting to my writing. I slowed down a bit, but continued to slog on. I wrote a screenplay I didn't like much, showed it to Laddie, and said I wanted to do a better job. He told me to do whatever I had to do, and so I wrote a completely different script. The first one was about Luke's father, and the second one took place at a later time and was mainly about Luke.

For two years I was writing. When I decided I was happy with the script, Gary and I talked about where to shoot the film—the U.S. or England. Gary visited England to investigate and reported that he thought it would be better for us to film over there. Then we started interviewing people and setting up the production.

AA: The connection with Laddie, I assume, was important not just because of the deal but also because he was someone in the movie establishment who believed in it.

GL: Well, yes, but I had very few dealings with the studio on *Star Wars*. I made contact with Laddie a dozen times before we started shooting and maybe a dozen times afterward. The biggest advantage I had with him was that he left me alone.

It was an independent production, which was fairly unusual for Fox at that time. The last thing they had done which was *quasi*-independent was *Lucky Lady*. They wanted to shoot that in Mexico but not with an American company. But it was still a Fox picture. *Star Wars* wasn't a Fox production. Essentially, it was funded by Fox, but my production company made it. We did our own contracts, union deals, everything without much connection with Fox.

AA: Had Lucasfilm been formed at that time?

GL: Yes, Lucasfilm was founded in 1970.

AA: And the licensing division?

GL: That division was formed about a year and a

half ago, primarily to do the merchandising and marketing of Lucasfilm pictures. On *Star Wars* we shared the merchandising operation with Fox, but because Fox didn't have a real merchandising division we had to build our own. After the film's success I had to have a merchandising company to control things. I didn't want the market flooded with junk.

My operating premise is that if we're offered a quality product, a well-made one, I'm interested. We turn down products, even though a lot of money is involved, if they're not up to standard. We did so on the first picture and had conflict with Fox over it. It was contrary, they felt, to the way people do business. For example, some junk-jewelry manufacturer came by and offered half a million dollars for a particular franchise, and when we turned him down Fox got very upset. But I just didn't want to have junk in every five-and-dime store throughout the nation. If it bore the *Star Wars* name, it had to meet our standards.

AA: So you took a personal interest in the merchandising?

GL: I followed it all the way through. Since then we have diversified the company's interests. Now it covers publishing, marketing, publicity, and advertising. I've always had a very strong interest in the way my films are promoted and released.

AA: And what of Industrial Light and Magic, the opticals and effects company?

GL: ILM was founded in 1974 when I was still writing the first film. The company evolved from our investigating the existing optical facilities when we were preparing *Star Wars*. We found that there wasn't, as far as we could discern, a special-effects company equipped to do what I wanted to do. The only course was to start a company of my own to do the special effects, and to start it from scratch, hiring young people and, where necessary, training them. Colin Cantwell was the first special-effects supervisor to take charge of the operation. He left

to do computer research and we then hired John Dykstra to run things. He left when *Star Wars* was completed and Brian Johnson and Richard Edlund are in charge now.

AA: Did Fox support ILM?

GL: In the beginning Fox didn't support the operation, so for the first six months I was supporting it out of my *Graffiti* earnings. Once I got Fox's go-ahead to do *Star Wars*, I got reimbursed for my original investment of between \$400,000 and \$500,000.

AA: Did you have to start ILM long before the picture got underway?

GL: Yes. I could not have waited for Fox's decision to make the picture since I knew it would take a year to get ILM going. I wanted to base the company in San Francisco, but it became clear that to try to do something so complicated that far away from the film laboratories might push Fox too far. So ILM was started in L.A. and operated there for two-and-a-half years. Then I moved it to San Francisco.

Monday, August 6

Stage 9 is alive with the sound of Yoda. This arcane little mystic from whom Luke seeks the wisdom and skills he needs to challenge Vader has at last made his debut. Yoda is being manipulated by Frank Oz, one of the wizards of Muppetry.

Yoda's house is the tiniest set in the film, yet one of the most interesting. It's a nest into which the cameras peer like investigators at the improbable life within while technicians observe on nearby video screens.

Irvin Kershner regards this sequence as "the heart of the picture," and so I asked him why.

"Well, it expresses the philosophical content of the

picture," he explained. "The sequence is an important exposition at the center of what is happening, and helps to reveal why it is happening, in this fable.

"In these scenes between Yoda and Luke, the Force is best understood as something very real. We learn how it is used, where it comes from. The Jedi training program and disciplines are explained. The concept of the Force's use for good rather than evil is promulgated. Finally, these scenes lead to the big confrontation duel between Luke and Darth Vader, a fight that is very ritualized, and based on the disciplines these scenes with Yoda reveal."

On Dagobah, Luke has to make an awesome decision, whether to remain on that planet long enough to gain powers that could save the galaxy, or to leave precipitately to aid his imperiled friends.

"This decision," says Kersh, "is the element of ambiguity that makes the picture's content so rich. Whatever Luke decides can be interpreted two ways. His decision can be seen as a character strength or a character weakness, depending on how you look at it. What is more moral: to try to save the world or to attempt to rescue the friends closest to your heart? That is the moral dilemma at the root of the matter."

I asked Kersh if he had ever worked on a set so small. He had, it seems, filmed in a dollhouse when directing *Loving*, "but it was three times as big as Yoda's house," he added.

Knowing him to be "almost a vegetarian," I asked Kersh if he approved of the fact that Yoda is definitely a picky eater, favoring herbs, plants, and fungi to more conventional foods. "Thoroughly," Kersh replied. "It reveals another side of his wisdom. He's conquered his senses, his fears, his anger, his ego. Food, like furniture, is not important. What is important to him is what he knows, does, feels. That is the furniture of his environment."

That sounded very impressive indeed, and uplifted by so beatific a concept I withdrew and contemplated Yoda again. Subsequently, however, I was disturbed by the sight of Kersh hurrying from the direction of

the breakfast trolley munching what appeared to be the greasiest of bacon sandwiches. But my eyes had deceived me. When challenged, he described to me the contents of his sandwich. "100 percent wholewheat bread, a defatted almond-based spread, and sugarless jam," he said proudly.

I felt rather ashamed—I was eating a hamburger. Well, we can't all be Yodas.

Wednesday, August 8

It was just one of those days for Mark Hamill.

His scenes with Yoda had been going well. The improbable little master of the Force had been explaining to Luke that training to be a Jedi Knight would involve him in the most rigorous of disciplines.

"I am not afraid," Luke tells him.

"You will be, my son," Yoda replies. "You will be."

The third take of this scene was excellent. "Print it," Kersh called with satisfaction.

It was then we heard Mark scream. "Help!" he shouted. "There's a snake up my leg!"

It was true. One of the little brown king snakes from Africa being used in these scenes—they're about two feet long—had become camera-shy. It had retreated from the glare of the lights to an environment more akin to its natural habitat.

"They're not dangerous," Mark was assured by Mike Cullen, our snake handler, after he had coaxed the little creature from its coveted hiding place. "They make excellent pets."

"I don't keep pets there," the actor responded firmly.

Mark takes most things in his stride, in a manner of speaking, but there are aspects of the Dagobah sequences that could cause anyone to ask, "Why do I do this for a living?"

When the move is made this week to the *Star Wars* stage, Mark will be sharing scenes with creatures most

of us prefer to look at in zoos. The list of these critters is quite formidable, and includes a twenty-two-foot-long anaconda snake, pythons, a boa constrictor, a five foot iguana, lizards, and giant toads.

Mike Cullen, who runs a livestock supply company called Animal Actors, brought some 100 animals and reptiles for the producer and director to choose from. This selection included rats, bats, spiders, and scorpions. "We like to give people a wide choice," he told me amiably.

Cullen has been an animal handler for years, keeping his livestock on a small farm in Norfolk, although sometimes supply and demand requires that a creature or two spend the night at his London flat.

"Have the neighbors complained?" I asked.

"Only once," he replied. "I had a puma in my bath."

But Cullen is actually very strict about animal care. "No creature I have ever supplied has been allowed to be ill-treated," he assured me. "My rule is that if it can't be done with kindness and training, then it won't be done at all. We wouldn't even allow a tarantula to be crushed."

"Well, I suppose that depends on where it hides," said Mark when I told him about Cullen's rules. "You know," he added thoughtfully, "I have only two allergies that I know of: tarantula venom and rattlesnake bite."

"That's not abnormal," I assured him.

And he went back to a scene with an iguana.

Thursday, August 9

What *is* the Force? I have been looking up the original definition. In *Star Wars* Ben Kenobi defined it thus: "It's an energy field created by all living things. It surrounds us and penetrates us. It binds the galaxy together."

If only we on Earth could tap it. What a lot of

problems that would solve, including the problem of communication.

In France the Force is feminine. "Que la force soit avec toi," they say in *La Guerre des Étoiles*. And the French, notoriously perverse, call R2-D2, D2-R2; Luke is Luc; Han is Yan; and Chewbacca unashamedly Chiktabba.

In Italy, Leia is a principessa, of course, and R2 a liltling Cinunopiotto, but even the Italians fall apart with C-3PO—he's D3-BO there.

The Germans call C-3PO Ce-Dreipeo and in France he's Z6-PO. To the Italians, Darth Vader is Lord Darth Fener and he's Dark Vador in France.

But whether it's called *L'Empire Contre-Attaque* (France, Belgium, Switzerland), *Das Imperium Schlägt Zurück* (Germany, Austria), *L'Impero Colpisce Ancora* (Italy), *El Imperio Contraataca* (Spain, Latin America), *Imperiumin Vastaisku* (Finland), *Imperiet Slår Igen* (Denmark), *Imperiet Slår Tilbake* (Norway), or *Rymdimperiet Slår Tillbaka* (Sweden), clearly it's not language that is the linking factor but the story being told on the screen.

Friday, August 10

Before deciding to build the big stage here at Elstree for *Empire's* largest interior sets, the company scouted African locations in search of a terrain to match George Lucas's description of the swamp planet.

Now this murky jungle environment with its sinister boggy lake has at last arisen on the *Star Wars* stage, and we are shooting on it.

This set looks like nothing on Earth, which is how it is supposed to look, for it is the forest of our subconscious inhabited by nightmare things that move. Incidentally, the mist and rain effects produce a humidity as clammy as many of us have known on actual tropical locations.

The scenes of Luke's first encounter with Yoda are awkward to shoot, full of detail, difficult to hurry. Prior to each set-up Kersh stalks the undergrowth like a peripatetic hunter seeking a secure encampment, with Kurtz at his side pressing for a decision. For there is understandably an air of urgency on the set now as the movie struggles to reach completion. Kersh's meticulousness is a quality that has to be weighed against the need to finish. But his endurance and stamina are impressive. This tall, sparse man moves like a pliant giant through the jungle undergrowth which is surrounded by that unique miasma of cables and equipment that seems inevitably to place a movie set on the edge of chaos.

Thus it was a contrast to sit in the comfort of Kersh's office among its well-chosen prints and relaxing furnishings. Kersh was not there, he seldom is, but it was the setting George Lucas was working in that day.

Alan Arnold: Last time we were talking about your companies, particularly about Industrial Light and Magic. As the entire history of the movie business is one of innovation, I wonder if you feel your interest in special effects has helped to further film technology?

George Lucas: Well, when we began building the computer-controlled camera, we were using existing technology. It had been used for training pilots and other purposes, but nobody had really applied it to film. Before our use of computer-controlled cameras, it had not been possible to pan on flying objects in the way we did in *Star Wars*.

AA: Looking back, which films strike you as being technically remarkable for their times?

GL: That's a hard question because films are remarkable for a lot of different reasons and it's difficult to say what was invented for a particular picture because much of the time it doesn't show up on the screen. Concealment, after all, is the art or artifice of it. It shows up when you go out to use a camera and realize it's got a new little refinement on

it that somebody thought up for a previous picture. Movie technology advances by trial and error, but it goes on advancing.

AA: But in the *Star Wars* films, technology and artistic content are vital partners, aren't they?

GL: In order to do a fantasy film—which by its very nature is firmly rooted in the implausible—a filmmaker is forced into using a great deal of technology because he is actually realizing dreams. Of course, there are certain creative limitations, especially in the conceiving and the writing of a fantasy picture. I know there are things that just can't be filmed so I can't write them into the script, no matter how much I may want to.

AA: Looking into the future, what technological developments do you see going into your movies?

GL: I think film will more and more convert to video, a more electronic medium. The day will come when video will be of equal quality to film and when more people will switch over to using video, instead of film, to shoot theatrical motion pictures.

AA: What is the problem with video now?

GL: The quality, the resolution. Its images are not as sharp or clear as film images.

AA: I'd like to talk more about the making of *Star Wars*. We'd gotten to the point where you were about to make the picture. Toward the end of shooting there was a critical period, wasn't there?

GL: Well, because I was about four weeks over schedule, the studio more or less cut me off. Later, they relented and we got the film finished, but the problems weren't over by any means. I had an editor who didn't work out. So when I got back to the U.S., we had to start from scratch editorially, which put us another three months behind. Yet we still had to get the film to delivery-print stage in the same amount of time. During these months Fox was at its most discouraging. The picture was costing too much, they thought, and it was over schedule. A major setback was that when we got back to

California, we found that ILM hadn't shot anything acceptable. They had spent a year and \$1 million and had only come up with one acceptable shot—so it didn't look like they were going to be able to finish on schedule. It was a very grim time. Moreover, there were parts of the film that I just wasn't able to complete with available footage. I wanted to go back and do some second-unit work and shoot more, particularly on R2. We never really got R2 to move more than two or three feet in the whole film. I knew we had to fix it and make him move so we could film it. But the studio was reluctant to give me any more money for this, though they eventually gave me about half of what I needed.

AA: Why hadn't ILM shot anything?

GL: They had been concerned with building equipment. They were trying to get the operation going, so the emphasis had been on research and technology. John Dykstra is basically a camera technician. He likes building cameras. So that's what he had been doing—building cameras. When it came to actually getting the shots and making the movie (which was what I was vitally concerned about), he wasn't as interested. I stressed that I didn't want him to use computers and a lot of technology for something that could be done by a conventional method. I didn't want to get into a giant research and development project, building complicated equipment to do things that could be done simply. But John, it seemed to me, became obsessed with the research work to the exclusion of the practical matter of shooting the movie effects.

I went to ILM every week and worked directly with Richard Edlund and Dennis Muren, the cameramen, brought in a new production supervisor, George Mather, and tried to organize the place. At that point there was no real production schedule, and no plan of how they were going to finish all the shots on time. I laid out the storyboards and generally reorganized things.

AA: Is it possible some of the problems stemmed

from the fact that the basic know-how was locked in *your* head, that you alone knew what you wanted?

GL: Well, I knew how the shots had to fit into the film. I tried to convey that information to the special-effects people through the storyboards I did before I went to England. I also cut together some black-and-white footage of airplanes flying around, dogfights and stuff, so that they had that as an additional guide. I told them how long the shots were, how big the spaceships had to appear, where they moved. They had a lot to go on, but in the end somebody had to make the decisions. Somebody had to be there to say yes or no to every set-up. In the end I had to say, "I want this red, that blue," and so on. . . .

AA: After this very critical period for *Star Wars* how did you progress?

GL: Very slowly at first. A big boost to morale came around Christmas 1976 when we released the trailer. Suddenly people at ILM realized that the film was not an open-ended proposition. It was scheduled to get done no matter what. That reality sank in deeply and ILM knuckled down. To speed things up more, I put three editors on the project and we all worked very long hours.

AA: When did you first see *Star Wars* with an audience?

GL: At the San Francisco screening in May 1977. It was the first time I'd seen it with a non-crew audience.

AA: Well, the reaction was unprecedented. How did you feel at that moment?

GL: It was enjoyable, but when you have lived so long with a movie you're so numb, so tired, so emotionally involved that it's hard to jump up and down. You feel good, but it's a quiet sort of feeling.

AA: Surely, the joy was in seeing other people's enjoyment.

GL: It's an emotional experience, like getting married. You're in shock. There's a sense of relief. The

thing works, you tell yourself. *Star Wars* works. That was my primary reaction.

AA: Suddenly, you had made what was to prove the most successful film of all time. Was there a change in how the industry reacted to you after that?

GL: The biggest change had come after *American Graffiti*. I was taken seriously as a director after that. *Star Wars* merely strengthened that. I don't have a close relationship with Hollywood, but when I go into a studio now the studio heads are much nicer to me than they were before. In L.A. they tend to get excited about success. They throw parties and do the stuff that essentially only builds egos.

AA: Which you don't have, and don't have around you, if it can be avoided.

GL: I like making movies. Hollywood is dedicated to making deals. A lot of people there are into power politics and trying to be one-up on each other. Hollywood is like a grandiose high school as far as I'm concerned.

AA: I've heard you have a large area north of San Francisco given over to farming interests.

GL: I've bought a ranch in Marin County. That's where I'm going to put my film research facility. I also plan to research farming so most of the land will be used for farming and ranching. It will be like making movies in a ranch environment.

AA: How will people use this film facility?

GL: In the past I've always had other filmmakers around me who have rented space at my office. It's a development of this idea, but primarily it is for Marin County filmmakers. They will have access to screening rooms, film and book collections, and so on. It will be like it was for me at film school, a community of people working together making films.

AA: What type of films would you like to make in the future?

GL: Nonlinear films, basically, films that would use neither plot nor characters to convey emotional con-

tent. Pure film. Film, to me, is a plastic art. Relieved of all the hype, the ego, it is a wonderful material to mold. That's what I mean by pure film. The public may not yet be ready for it, but it will be. . . .

Wednesday, August 15

From the call sheet for today, I note that Ben Kenobi is required. This, to me, implies Sir Alec Guinness. But the call sheet specifies an anonymous double as standing-in for him in today's shots. So I asked Kurtz for an explanation.

"The simple answer is that although Ben is seen on the bog planet, he's not really there at all," he replied. Sensing my mystification, he went on: "When Kenobi appears it is as a vision, a ghost, an angel—he's a supernatural image intervening in the dialogue between Luke and Yoda."

The question, of course, is who will portray Ben Kenobi? Will it be Sir Alec? It is still not known. The distinguished actor, it seems, is recuperating from an eye operation, still pondering over the wisdom of repeating the role that made him—to his as much as anyone's surprise—an awful lot of money. It also introduced him to millions of people all over the world who previously had never heard of him, despite his many fine films. I am puzzled that it's Sir Alec's health that's the issue because two weeks ago he led a protest march to 10 Downing Street to petition Prime Minister Thatcher to cut the newly imposed taxes on theater seats. There must be a lot of Force behind the old warrior yet.

Friday, August 17

In a trailer beside the *Star Wars* stage, I took tea today with Miss Piggy of Muppet fame. Other guests present were Fozzie, Sam, and Animal, but there were only two of us in the trailer. All these characters, you see, are personified by Frank Oz who is with us this week to help bring Yoda to life and to serve as Yoda's voice.

Frank was born in England and grew up in Belgium before settling in America. His parents were amateur puppeteers and for eight years in San Francisco's Bay Area, Frank, too, entertained at parties, church bazaars, and supermarket openings. In the early 1960s, a meeting with Jim Henson, creator of the Muppets, changed the direction of Frank's life. At that time the Muppets were known mainly in the Washington, D.C., area in a TV show called "Sam and Friends." The Muppets took off nationally in 1970 when "Sesame Street" became a PBS network show. But only in the last four years have the Muppets become internationally known, and they are now seen in 100 countries. The team that masterminds them comprises Jim Henson, Jerry Juhl, and Frank Oz; Don Sellean, who built many of the puppets originally, died in 1978.

All the Muppet shows are made here at Elstree across the road from EMI at the Associated Television studios.

Miss Piggy is so famous that I asked Frank Oz if he ever envied her celebrity. "I wouldn't like to be that famous," he said. "I value my privacy. Mind you, Miss Piggy enjoys every moment of it. If it were not for me she would spend all her time in the limelight."

Monday, August 20

During what we now call the Golden Years of Hollywood—the 1930s—the studios maintained a paternalistic attitude toward their contract stars. Contracts stipulated, for example, that the stars “cooperate” with the studio publicity department. Survivors of the period have recalled that this deceptively mild term meant living, privately as well as publicly, in accordance with the image the publicists themselves created for a particular personality.

Bette Davis was one of the stars to rebel against this system. She considered it a form of slavery; not to have challenged it, she believed, would have destroyed her both as an actress and as a human being. The terrible danger that lurked behind the system, according to Olivia de Havilland, was that in seeking to live make-believe lives, some young stars never found time to know their true selves and remained forever children.

Today, the situation is completely different. Actors and actresses free-lance and although performers may be subject to picture options, long-term contracts are a thing of the past. The publicity departments of studios that still maintain staff publicists function very differently than during the thirties. They publicize pictures in the making or pictures being prepared for distribution, but have no authority over the stars.

When I began my assignment on *The Empire Strikes Back*, I knew very little about the careers of the young principals and nothing about them as human beings. Nor had they any reason to believe that I was someone they would come to feel at ease with. No contract told them to cooperate with me. We had to find a relationship based on the premise that during the making of the film we would all be working in the interests of its ultimate success. It's just one more illustration of the

fact that today no personality is bigger than the whole—the motion picture itself.

Getting on agreeable terms with Mark wasn't difficult, for he is an affable young man, and being a true professional he can talk off the top of his head when asked routine publicity questions. What was more difficult and gradual (which applies to most worthwhile relationships) was getting him to put aside stock imagery and talk in some depth. By the time the movie was almost over, a warm and trusting relationship had developed between us. The strain of a long picture, which in different ways has affected all of us, seems to find release as he talks to me about his present feelings and future hopes.

Mark Hamill: This film is a real endurance test. In the past six months there have been times when I thought I couldn't go on. The physical strain of the different things I've had to do has almost been too much. To be always in peak condition is a challenge, but I got to be very tense when the baby was due. But you just have to gear up for each day. I've been hung on wires, buried in snow, sealed in a tank full of water, had snakes crawling over me. In one scene I had to stand up and bump my head. We did this take fourteen times, and I hit the mark each time. I always had to hit the same place because of the camera angle. So I don't have several small lumps, just one big one. It all amounts to discipline. You've got to be disciplined in this business, though most people think it's all fun and glitter.

Alan Arnold: Are the demands of marriage and parenthood in conflict with the kind of discipline you need right now?

MH: Marilou is fairly understanding. But I have had to totally subjugate my relationship with her and the baby. I get home at night at 9 o'clock, and by 10:30 I'm asleep. I just can't help it. We don't go out to dinner, we don't see movies, going to see plays is a thing of the past. It's difficult.

AA: It's always a difficult combination—marriage and show business.

MH: Yes. It's the nature of this business. In it, a person has to be very selfish and think of himself and of the film. I can't leave the film at the studio. I take my worries home, constantly analyzing what I did that day, how it could have been done better, what the next day will bring. Also, I can't just read a scene in isolation from what's gone before. I have to flip through the script from the beginning. My scenes now are set on Dagobah, but I have to go back to scenes I did on the planet of Hoth to understand the motivation. Luke is a commander in the Rebel forces. For him to decide, after a major battle, to go in search of a vision is a pretty big step to take. In order to be convincing in the scenes I'm doing now, I have to reflect on scenes that went before.

AA: While you have your interpretation of the character, Kersh has views of his own.

MH: That's right, and sometimes our thinking doesn't quite match.

AA: Does he consult you sufficiently?

MH: He's pretty good about it. He knows what he wants in scenes and has a tendency to act them out, which I do not really like. But perhaps it saves time. Our only real flare-up was on the carbon-freezing-chamber set. Tempers were on edge anyway because it was like working in a sauna.

AA: What happened?

MH: He made a face and said, "Don't do that expression." It was *his* interpretation of what he thought I did. I knew I hadn't done it and it became a tug-of-war. I said: "I didn't do that, I just didn't." He said: "Yes, you did." "I didn't," I said. "Okay," he said, "you just go see the movie and you'll know you did." And I said, "I don't even want to see the movie." Then he said, "Really, so you're not going to go see the movie? Cut the lights, cut the camera, cut everything," he shouted. "Why shoot it? Mark doesn't want even to go and see it." It was all terribly childish. Everyone felt guilty seconds later.

- AA: Relationships with the crew have been important to you, haven't they?
- MH: Well, the crew is my family, so to speak. I can't work with a crew unless I feel they like me, not just understand and tolerate me, but like me.
- AA: The working Britisher is a no-nonsense sort of individual. You've been able to talk to this British crew in its own language and style.
- MH: Well, I thought so until the electricians gave a party. I had to clean off my make-up first and talk in the dressing room to Marilou and the baby. So we stayed in the room for a while and arrived a little late. By that time the boys had drunk enough to be honest. There was a certain flavor of "Go home, Yank" in their jokes which betrayed an underlying hostility. I couldn't really figure it out.
- AA: Latent anti-Americanism in this country is based mainly on ignorance and lack of self-knowledge.
- MH: Well, I think people should realize that America is like Europe in the sense that a person from the South, say from Georgia, feels just as much a foreigner in New York as a German in Piccadilly. But we are lumped under one category: Americans. I've seen loud-mouthed, ugly Americans with flowered shirts. I don't like them, either.
- AA: As you say, there's an element here with a chip on its shoulder. Some also think of Americans as being overly rich.
- MH: Yes, it is tied up with the money thing. *People* magazine said I was a millionaire.
- AA: Will the *Star Wars* movies make you a rich man?
- MH: I hope so. I don't know. Rich is a relative term. Really, if you have a full refrigerator and a place to sleep, reasonable peace of mind, and friends you can trust, how much more do you need? It sounds corny, I know, but it's what I believe. George Lucas is supposedly a very wealthy man, but he's not out buying Gucci shoes. His lifestyle is simple from what I can see. Maybe he has a

whole room full of jeans and sweatshirts now. But I just don't see him or Gary going berserk with riches. They're men who like to make films.

AA: Do you give way to buying impulses?

MH: Well, I do give way to impulses but they are usually for ridiculous things like marionettes. I'm not into foreign sports cars or other exotic things. I don't like driving since the accident. I usually ride a bicycle.

AA: Do you have a house of your own?

MH: I bought a house last November—that is, I made a down payment on one. The house has wooden floors and two-and-a-half bedrooms. It was built by a doctor in the early 1950s and looks like a house you'd find in New England.

AA: Where is it?

MH: Off Pacific Coast Highway in Malibu. We bought it in November 1978 and left in February 1979 when we started out for Norway. To furnish it, Marilou has been buying some antiques while we're here. I want a roll-top desk, a rocking chair, and a grandfather clock. That's something I've always wanted.

AA: As you said, being rich is a relative thing. To you, a grandfather clock is riches.

MH: I don't want to suggest a contempt for money. The percentage George gave us of *Star Wars* was probably thirty times our salary. He didn't have to do it.

AA: Why was *Star Wars* such a success?

MH: It's difficult to guess. In the States the film was like a Hula-Hoop or a Frisbee, a summertime fun thing. It coincided with people getting out of school, taking their holidays. They were ready to laugh, to be thrilled. *Star Wars* was a celebration.

AA: Has success at a young age meant that you've missed the chance to study, to grow?

MH: My sister, Jeannie, lives on a farm in Missouri and gets up at dawn to feed the cows. That's a whole different life. Perhaps it's a better one for growth. I still want to learn a lot of things. I think

at times I am missing out. I'm having to live off the top of life in a way most people don't, wouldn't care to. Perhaps I'll retire and carefully use my money so I can do exactly what I want to do. I'll take Nathan to Japan, and I'll learn how to play the flute. I'll learn how to carve and whittle. I'll still be an actor, but an actor needs to experience many things so that he can interpret a larger variety of roles.

Tuesday, August 21

This weekend Paul Hirsch will be returning to California to continue the editing over there. I asked him for a progress report.

Paul Hirsch: We are in pretty good shape, despite certain inevitable problems that arose from using two units and having to shoot on certain sets for weeks on end. In some instances the first unit has moved on to another set leaving second unit to complete a sequence. As a result, it has taken a long time for all the material concerned with a particular sequence to reach me. I have had to begin to edit sequences before all the material was available, which can be tricky.

Alan Arnold: Normally, you would wait until the whole sequence is complete and then start editing.

PH: Yes, I like to tackle scenes after I have all the material. It saves time.

AA: It is the first time you have edited material by Irvin Kershner. What is your opinion of his work?

PH: He has a fluid style that comes from his careful staging of the action. In addition, he is very adept at covering a scene in ways that are not simplistic. He doesn't do things in an obvious way, but more subtly. Whether audiences will be aware of this, I don't know. They probably won't be, which may be

his intention. He has a very assured shooting style. He knows what he's doing and plots it out. It's not haphazard.

AA: Has there been any evidence as we got over schedule of haste?

PH: Not in his work. I would say that he responds well to pressure. I don't think his work has suffered. Of course, he may feel that if he'd had more time he would have done things differently. But in fact, the recent material, shot as we approached the end of the schedule, is among the best in the film.

AA: What will be the most obvious difference between the style of *Star Wars* and the style of *The Empire Strikes Back*?

PH: I could only answer that when we finish. The style grows out of the nature of the entire picture. We shall be able to answer that when we screen the two pictures back to back.

AA: When I saw an assembly of footage, I was struck by the use of massive close-ups of Carrie and Harrison in the love scenes.

PH: Close-ups are intimate shots appropriate to a love scene. If you put the camera far away from a kiss, it doesn't have the same power. You have to move into close-up to achieve a love scene's full power. In all types of scenes you try to find the cinematic technique that best suits the purpose.

AA: What do you think of Peter Suschitzky's photography?

PH: It has a soft, luminous look to it. The quality of the photography is very high.

AA: Three weeks ago George Lucas joined you in the cutting room. How do you work together?

PH: I have been assembling scenes for the first cut. Because we are over schedule, George took the first four reels, where he felt our greatest difficulties lay, and started the second cut on them. I don't anticipate any major problems but, because of the nature of the shooting, we are missing material from the middle of the film. So right now it's pointless

to look at the end and try to analyze how that works until we have the middle.

AA: What length of film are you aiming at?

PH: We are going for between 110 and 120 minutes. We've shot about 120 hours and printed about 60 hours of that.

AA: Both George Lucas and Irvin Kershner have told me there is an exposition problem. What is your opinion?

PH: Well, what happened was that George had taken the first four reels which I'd assembled in script order, eliminated certain things, and added some miniature shots. We looked at what he'd done and it was evident we had a problem. We had too much exposition, in fact. An audience has no way of evaluating what is important and what is not unless certain aspects are given emphasis and focus, and this is very much an editing job. We have screened those opening reels again, though, and feel the problem is pretty much solved.

AA: In editing *Empire*, do you rely on the audience knowing the story of *Star Wars*?

PH: Well, *Star Wars* started in the middle of itself, so to speak. By the time the first reel is over, all you know is that there's a princess in trouble and two robots wandering around on a strange planet. But intimate knowledge of *Star Wars* isn't necessary to following the story of *The Empire Strikes Back*.

AA: Do the actors take an interest in what you do? They are very much in your hands, in a way.

PH: Editing and acting are similar in the sense that they both rely on intuition and technique.

AA: Does it help you to watch their performance on the set?

PH: Not really. You can be fooled by watching them live. They look quite different on film.

Wednesday, August 22

After nearly six months in space, Russia's Soyuz 33 cosmonauts are returning to Earth. They lifted off at the same time we did that day in Norway which seems so long ago. But we are still in a galaxy far, far away. . . .

Thursday, August 23

When Hollywood first put Flash Gordon (Buster Crabbe) on the screen forty-seven years ago, those filmmakers had their problems, too. Using a single camera, they accomplished some eighty-five set-ups a day, breaking for dinner and resuming afterward, but there were delays due to special effects. These delays caused the schedule to stretch to an unprecedented six weeks. Later, Universal successfully adapted the famous strip to TV-serial form and one of its most ardent fans during his childhood was George Lucas.

He talked to me today about this and other matters that influenced his formative years.

Alan Arnold: How did your interest in science fiction begin?

George Lucas: I've always been interested in the fantastic, and have always been prone to imagining a different kind of world from the here and now, and creating fantasies. When I was very young I loved make-believe. But it was the kind of make-believe that used all the technological toys I could come by, like model airplanes and cars. I suppose that an extension of that interest led to what later occupied my mind, the *Star Wars* stories.

AA: What about early reading?

GL: I wasn't that much of a reader. It wasn't until I went to college that I started to read seriously. I liked novels of exploration and works about and by the great explorers.

AA: Were fairy tales read to you as a child? I thought I detected influences of the Brothers Grimm.

GL: Those stories were read to me. But if there is an influence it's subconscious.

AA: Did the work of H.G. Wells figure in your background?

GL: Only in literature classes. There we read Orwell and Wells quite extensively.

AA: Did any work have a particular impact?

GL: I was partial to Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, to Huxley's *Brave New World*, and Orwell's *1984*.

AA: Some critics have called *Star Wars* animated comic strip. Did comic strips play a part in your early life?

GL: Yes. The "Flash Gordon" strip was in our local newspaper and I followed it. In the comic book area I liked adventures in outer space, particularly "Tommy Tomorrow," but movie serials were the real stand-out event. I especially loved the "Flash Gordon" serials. Thinking back on what I really enjoyed as a kid, it was those serials, that bizarre way of looking at things. Of course, I realize now how crude and badly done they were.

AA: Do you think the enjoyment you got from those serials led you eventually to make the *Star Wars* pictures?

GL: Well, loving them that much when they were so awful, I began to wonder what would happen if they were done really well. Surely, kids would love them even more.

AA: How old were you when "Flash Gordon" and the other serials fascinated you?

GL: Nine and ten.

AA: You grew out of it?

GL: No, I don't think I ever really grew out of it. Those serials will always be something I remember

—even though they were pretty awful technically.

AA: Even their special effects?

GL: Yes, when you consider that the movie *Things to Come* was made much earlier and has really good effects.

AA: What other films have impressed you in the fantasy field?

GL: *Metropolis*, *Forbidden Planet*. They stand out in my mind.

AA: The term "comic strip" is a bit misleading. Comics are seldom comic, are they?

GL: Originally, they were comic but the comic strip is now a sophisticated medium. It's storytelling through pictures. I was naturally drawn to the form through an interest in painting and drawing. Comic strips are also sociologically interesting, an indication of what a culture is all about. To me, Uncle Scrooge in the "Donald Duck" strip is a perfect indicator of the American psyche. There's so much that is precisely the essence of America about him that it's staggering.

AA: So you're not offended when someone calls your work animated comic strip?

GL: No. I'm a fan of comic art. I collect it. It is a kind of art, a more significant kind sociologically than some fine art. It says more about our time, which is what fine art should do. Art is a record of life, contemporary thinking, and culture. Today's comic art is very, very sensitive to the culture around it.

If the comic-strip genre today, conceived, say, by artists like Philippe Druillet, seems less than comic it is because the young are not as young as they once were, their dreams not as innocent. That was inevitable. We shouldn't wonder that the young look today to more psychologically complex interpreters of their fantasies, to artists like Moebius or Druillet, who open up all kinds of lurid worlds and vistas. The truth is that we don't feel at ease with the here and now, and we still know so little of what lies beyond. We're like the ancient myth-

makers. We know next to nothing of other environments. All we can do is imagine and dream, and all our dreams are as unique to every one of us as our secret selves.

AA: It seems to me your approach is sociological and psychological, whereas, for example, a contemporary like Steven Spielberg shows an underlying spiritual motivation, specifically in *Close Encounters*.

GL: I try to deal more with ideas and people, the way we are, the way things operate, moods, society's likes and dislikes. To me, film is historical document and therefore it has practical value. People 500 years from now will look at our films and be able to figure out what we were like. Our moods, our hopes, our dreams will be revealed to them. Since films reflect social moods, they are in a sense a technological extension of, a derivation from, the comic strip.

If you were to take a comic strip and photograph it, then put in all the in-betweens, you'd have an animated film. If you take the animated drawings and replace them with live-action footage, you'd have a movie. It's a logical extension of storytelling, combining the graphic with the literary.

AA: Which contemporaries in the graphic field interest you?

GL: There are quite a few illustrators in the science-fiction and science-fantasy modes I like very much. I like them because their designs and imaginations are so vivid. Illustrators like Frazetta, Druillet, and Moebius are quite sophisticated in their styles.

AA: When did you begin to write *Star Wars*?

GL: It is difficult to pinpoint the moment when thinking about it evolved into actually putting it down on paper, but it was about 1973.

AA: How did the characters evolve?

GL: They all came out of one composite—Luke was the composite, which is another way of saying they came out of me.

AA: You were the composite, your subconscious?

GL: I was dealing with two opposites, and these are the two opposites in myself—a naive, innocent idealism and a view of the world that is cynical, more pessimistic. My starting point was the idea of an innocent who becomes cynical. Should Luke be a brash young kid or an intellectual? Should he be a she? At one point, I was going to have a girl at the center. Luke Skywalker might never have been; he might have been a heroine. Leia came out of Luke, so to speak, just as Han did, as the opposite of Luke. Han Solo evolved from my wanting to have a cynical foil for the innocent Luke. A lot of the characters came out of Luke because Luke had many aspects. So I took certain aspects of the composite Luke and put them into other characters.

AA: How did the story take shape?

GL: Originally, the story was about an older brother coming to find his younger brother, who's living on a farm, so that together they can rescue their father, an old Jedi. The older brother is a battle-hardened warrior. This character evolved into Han, the other side of Luke and an older brother figure. Ben Kenobi developed from the father figure into a friend of the father.

AA: Darth Vader—what was his derivation?

GL: Darth Vader and Ben were developed in my first script—it was their story. When I wrote the second script it was later in time and Luke was the focus. I wanted to develop an essentially evil, very frightening character. He started as a kind of intergalactic bounty hunter, evolved into a grotesque knight, and as I got deeper into the knight ethos he became more a dark warrior than a mercenary. Again, I split him up and it was from the early concept of Darth Vader as a bounty hunter that Boba Fett came.

AA: Also in *The Empire Strikes Back* you've introduced Lando Calrissian. How was he devised?

GL: Since the *Star Wars* saga is essentially about Luke's background and his destiny, I wanted to round out Han Solo's character a little more. So I

brought in a character who was from Han's past, a kind of alter ego for Han. Lando really evolved out of that. He is similar to Han, but different. Lando is more of a rogue, gambler, and con artist than a fast-shooting, fast-talking type.

AA: What was the derivation of the nonhuman characters in the saga?

GL: Chewbacca was inspired by Indiana, my Alaskan husky. My wife drives a little station wagon, and the dog sits on the front seat next to her and is bigger than she is. Indiana is a huge black bear of a dog and as Marcia drives along she has this big fuzzy dog looking like he's copilot. It was that image that fashioned the Wookiee, as well as the fact that Indiana was with me when I was writing the whole thing. There was a dog in *American Graffiti*, but I didn't use Indiana for the part because it was a night scene and I wanted a white dog. My wife was very upset that I didn't put my own dog in the movie; so I said I'd put Indiana's spirit in the next one. And that's how the Wookiee came into being.

AA: Now let's take C-3PO and R2-D2.

GL: It began with R2-D2. Walter Murch and I were mixing *American Graffiti*, and Walter wanted to make some changes in one of the sound tracks. He needed the dialogue tracks for reel two and so he said, "George, get me R2-D2," meaning reel two, dialogue two, the second of several dialogue tracks. And I said, "That's a great name, Walter" and wrote it down in my notebook. When we finished work on *Graffiti* I began writing *Star Wars*, but R2-D2 was still only a name. I wanted two robots in the film and wanted one to be sort of a human type, the other to be more of a computer type. I also wanted there to be humor in the fact that they were very different in temperament, a sort of Abbott and Costello comedy team—one short and fat, the other tall and skinny. I don't know why, but from the start I thought of R2-D2 as being the smaller one, and then I had to think up a name compatible

with R2-D2. After playing around with a lot of letter and number combinations, I came up with C-3PO.

AA: We have talked about influences on your work from mythology. Other people have pointed to influences from Westerns. The way some characters are dressed has prompted suggestions that you are influenced by the medieval morality play. Do influences from all these sources come together in your work?

GL: Yes, it is influenced by a lot of different historical periods and a lot of different social mores, customs, and conventions. But I didn't want the *Star Wars* saga to be suspended in any particular time or circumstance. There is, I think, a common thread through fairy tale, myth, far-away adventures, and Westerns. They all derive from a basic mythology, and by using all these different influences, I've tried to give a timeless feel to my storytelling.

AA: Now to the matter of the casting of your characters . . .

GL: For many months I saw thousands of actors and actresses for the roles. I did not want a casting director to make decisions about who should see me and who should not. I saw most of those who applied, even if only for a few minutes. I would interview a group, bring them back as a smaller group, and have them read for me. Then out of that group I'd pick another even smaller group for a video test. Out of that I'd pick the best for film tests. It was through this process that Mark was discovered. He came through the best in all the reading, video, and screen tests.

AA: What appealed to you about him? A boyish innocence?

GL: Yes, the innocence. He is good looking, but not in a super-rugged, Clint Eastwood way. And he was a very good actor. He was sharp and seemed to have his wits about him, and I wanted Luke to be that way.

AA: Because there's a lot of yourself in Luke.

GL: In a way. I wrote from my point of view, as if I were going into that world. It was more fun to write that way and it helped me through the writing process. It's nearly impossible to separate an author from his characters. The hardest thing is to develop characters that aren't a reflection of the mind that creates them.

AA: You knew Harrison's work from *American Graffiti*, but why did you think he was suitable for the role of Han?

GL: I liked Harrison from working with him on *Graffiti*. I thought he was a very talented actor and I enjoyed working with him. But when I considered him for *Star Wars*, I was afraid I was being influenced by the fact that I liked him, that I was familiar with his work, that I was thinking of him for the part because of my previous associations with him. So I did tests with a lot of others, too. But I just couldn't find anybody who had his qualities as an actor and fit my concept of the character as well as he did.

AA: Why, for Princess Leia, didn't you choose an absolute unknown rather than someone from a show-business family?

GL: I hired Carrie because she's an excellent actress, and I didn't consider her well known. I never thought of her as from a show-business family. At first, though, I wasn't that interested in having her do the part. I was looking for someone much younger than Carrie appeared to be. But, in fact, she was the right age. She was eighteen but she appeared to be thirtyish in her bearing, in the sophisticated way she handled herself. I came to realize that this was an asset and that it suggested the strength of character one would expect in a young senator. So her deep voice, her sophistication, I felt, were assets because underneath it all she was still just eighteen.

AA: The character of Ben Kenobi looks very Christ-like. What kind of image were you trying to achieve?

GL: This character started out as Luke's father and became the friend of Luke's father. I wanted a character who was an old warrior, very stately, a father image for Luke. He evolved out of that. He wasn't meant to be Christ-like, but rather a thoughtful and intelligent man with a noble bearing—a symbol of goodness and mystical power.

AA: How did you come by the idea of the Force and how would you define it?

GL: The Force evolved out of various developments of character and plot. I wanted a concept of religion based on the premise that there is a God and there is good and evil. I began to distill the essence of all religions into what I thought was a basic idea common to all religions and common to primitive thinking. I wanted to develop something that was nondenominational but still had a kind of religious reality. I believe in God and I believe in right and wrong. I also believe that there are basic tenets which through history have developed into certainties, such as "thou shalt not kill." I don't want to hurt other people. "Do unto others . . ." is the philosophy that permeates my work.

AA: Yet the magnitude of the endeavors you've become associated with have brought you into a highly competitive world. Do you feel equipped to deal with it?

GL: I try to avoid being competitive as much as I can. I set down certain guidelines for my companies that reflect my philosophy, which I feel is practical and right.

AA: Will you take a close interest in the exploitation, marketing, and distribution of the new film?

GL: Yes, but more to protect it than to make more money. It's not the business aspects I'm worried about but a concern that the quality of the film comes through.

AA: Are there things you learned from the distribution of *Star Wars* that you would want to change in relation to *Empire's* debut?

GL: A lot of things. They have to do with organiza-

tion. We have a much better organization now than we had before. We were very small then and the whole thing caught us by surprise. Now we have the experience and a larger and more capable business structure behind us to see that things happen in a more cohesive fashion.

AA: It's been said that in the United States *Star Wars* achieved an almost quasi-religious cult. What are your views about that?

GL: A number of churches in America have used *Star Wars* as a way of getting young people interested in religious ideas. I think that's good. It gives young people something entertaining to relate to which at the same time may explain concepts of good and evil.

AA: You don't see that as a weakness on the part of the churches themselves?

GL: Not really. They're obviously trying to get young people to embrace religion. And that can't be too easy, considering how strong the amoral influence of television is today.

Friday, August 24

Sir Alec Guinness will re-create his role as Ben Kenobi—this is now official.

As is sometimes the way in the film business, I found out by chance, by noticing in the production office newly printed name plates intended for his dressing room.

"Alec Guinness," they read, no knightly prefix, which is how he wanted it on *Star Wars*. And indeed, it's not the "sir" but Sir Alec Guinness's stature as an actor that has prestige value for a film.

Anyway, he is going to play Ben Kenobi, and it must be a relief to George Lucas and Gary Kurtz that this uncertainty has been resolved. When I spoke to Lucas today on the subject, he admitted that he had

very much hoped Sir Alec would be able to play the part.

"Having the same actors play the same roles is obviously an important aspect of the quality we're trying to achieve," he said. "Sir Alec is Ben Kenobi. He's the real thing. I was very concerned that he come back to play the role."

I asked about Sir Alec's health. "I spent last evening with him," said George Lucas. "He told me that his doctors say he is getting better every day. On our part, we have been going over the script, simplifying the role, in order to reduce the strain on him."

I suggested that it was a matter of professional loyalty, that Sir Alec, if fit enough, had an obligation to a venture which had already proved of such material benefit to him, but Lucas would not comment. "I just want the film to be as perfect as possible," was all that he would say.

This conversation brought back to me what Sir Alec himself had told me about how he originally became interested in playing Ben Kenobi.

The year is 1975, the place the Warner Bros. Studios, Burbank, California. Sir Alec Guinness is appearing in *Murder by Death* which Robert Moore, formerly a Broadway actor, is directing.

An unsolicited script by George Lucas reaches Guinness's dressing room. Its cover page depicts, in comic-strip style, a young man in smock and leotards brandishing a sword, a sort of cloak-and-dagger figure with spatial overtones—Luke Skywalker in prototype.

"Good God, it's science fiction!" Sir Alec tells himself in dismay. "Why are they offering me this?" He had no real interest in the genre, and the matter might have rested there.

But it didn't. Sir Alec knew the author's name, knew him to be the creator of *American Graffiti*, and when Robert Moore came into the dressing room, Sir Alec pointed to the script and to George Lucas's name. "Now, there's a real filmmaker," Moore told him. "I come from the theater, but Lucas is a *film*

man. I'm just putting something on film, but Lucas writes and thinks in the motion-picture idiom. There's a world of difference."

"Well, I thought that very humble, very generous of Robert," Sir Alec told me. "Robert, like me, is a man of the theater, although he's made some excellent films. But I knew what he meant about Lucas, so I began to read the script."

The dialogue, Sir Alec thought, was "pretty ropey" and yet the story had suspense. He kept turning the pages to find out what happened next. A few days later he met George Lucas.

"We met over lunch," Sir Alec recalls. "I was surprised to find that he was so young. I liked his quiet diffidence. I trusted him. It was the reason why I agreed to play the role. I felt I could safely work with him."

So Sir Alec Guinness was cast as Obi-Wan (Ben) Kenobi whom the original script described as "an old desert rat." What, Sir Alec asked himself, did the writer mean by "an old desert rat"? "Did they expect me to play some wild, eccentric, half-dotty old man appearing out of a hole in the sand dunes?" he wondered.

George Lucas explained that he meant the character to have some slight connotation of Gandalf in the Tolkien tales. "Ah, yes," Sir Alec thought. "Yes, I can do something like that, a quiet character, not too magical or strange, but sympathetic."

Nevertheless, Ben Kenobi evolved in performance and direction, even though there were times when the technical artifice surrounding the making of *Star Wars* was almost overwhelming.

"If you're sitting in some mock-up space capsule against blue screens and moving mattes it's easy to become disoriented," Sir Alec recalled. "Most things I've done have been involved with reality, with backgrounds of streets and rooms, friendly things like tables, chairs, and so forth, but often in *Star Wars* I seemed to be acting in a limbo and totally in the hands of technicians. And I'm really rather ignorant

of technicalities. I've often wanted to try my hand at directing—I've left it too late now—but if I'd directed a film it would have been on a subject rooted in the here and now. So, at times during *Star Wars* I was perhaps a bit puzzled, but I never lost faith in the project. There were people around who doubted the sanity of the venture and who were critical of George and Gary. 'Lucas doesn't know what he's doing,' they'd say, or 'Call this filmmaking?' But I had confidence in them."

Yet he, too, was surprised by the film's phenomenal success. "It was a darn good story dashingly told," he said, "and beyond that I can't explain it. Failure has a thousand explanations. Success doesn't need one."

Sir Alec's much-publicized percentage of *Star Wars* has left him "pretty flush," he admits, and free from any necessity to work, but he was materially comfortable before *Star Wars* anyway. Besides, actors of his stature work for more compulsive reasons. Actors like that don't retire. *Star Wars* also brings him continuous fan mail.

"There are some thirty or forty letters on my desk this morning," he informed me. "Unanswered as yet, I'm afraid. Some are very nice, but others frankly are dotty. You'd be surprised how many people with problems imagine Ben Kenobi can solve them. For example, there's a lady in L.A. whose marriage is in shreds who wants me to come and stay with them. The dotty ones who want a guru in the house are mainly in California."

Was his reappearance as Ben Kenobi ever in doubt?

Sir Alec: "During the making of *Star Wars* George and Gary asked me if I would reappear in a sequel. I told them, 'Yes, absolutely.' I was quite emphatic about it, but eight months ago I developed wretched eye trouble. It threatened to blind my left eye. Specialists told me that under no circumstances must I go into bright light. So I sort of withdrew, feeling I had no option. But three weeks ago it was clear the filmmakers had a problem with the scenes, and I felt

that if I could help them out of a difficulty, I must do so. It was as simple as that."

And very much in the spirit of show business.

Sunday/Monday, August 26/27

Take a bit of Coney Island and a hint of Atlantic City, stir it into a city of splendid Regency squares, and you have something like the improbable mixture that is Brighton, England.

Brighton is fifty miles south of London, where the chalky Sussex Downs meet the sea. The city grew, over two centuries, into the sizable city it is today.

Brighton's biggest hotels, face-lifted relics of times when the privileged vacationed in suites with Channel views, make excellent convention centers. Ornate sea-front hotels with rooms once favored by Europe's royalty are host to hundreds of conventions each year, one of which, the 37th World Science Fiction Convention (SEACON), took Gary Kurtz to Brighton's Hotel Metropole last weekend.

His mission was threefold: To open an exhibition showing aspects of the making of *The Empire Strikes Back*; to take part in a panel discussion; and to present a Hugo Award (the convention's equivalent of an Oscar) to the best dramatic presentation of a science-fiction theme. The award has been held by *Star Wars* for the past year.

Other guests of honor were such giants of the genre as Arthur C. Clarke, and veterans of the caliber of Frederik Pohl and L. Sprague de Camp. Although, from what I have come to know of him, I couldn't imagine George Lucas immersing himself in such an assembly (there were 3,000 delegates), Kurtz performed his ambassadorial duties with characteristic dignity. His appearance there had public relations value, too, because it is at such gatherings of devotees that word of mouth begins.

So, in pursuit of insights, I took a train to Brighton, joining the holiday crowds along a promenade of such architectural folly that it actually diminishes the sea. Then, reluctant to leave so English a scene, I stepped into the Metropole.

The contrast to the peaceful beach scene outside was a bit of a shock. The lobby was full of people quite unlike the crowds outside. Earnestness, not leisure, molded their expressions. Groups of fans surrounded their literary gurus. Pale, latter-day flower children squatted before their sages. As I climbed the splendid stairway down which Edward VII once strode, I realized I had entered a different world, and the fascination of it began to grow.

I sought out Craig Miller, director of fan relations for Lucasfilm, who took me on a tour. We walked through rooms filled with booths selling paperbacks, their multicolored covers depicting lurid shapes and machines. Other booths were selling paintings of similar surrealistic visions, and I could have bought statuettes so abstruse as to require some explaining once I'd gotten them home. In another room motion-picture companies had assembled their displays, and Craig and I stopped at the one promoting *Alien* whose stills and posters had been bought out by enthusiasts on opening day. Where, I asked, was the exhibit for *The Empire Strikes Back*?

Craig explained that it had been deliberately set apart, and we walked to a suite of rooms where a composite exhibit of photographic blow-ups, paintings, design sketches, and models illustrated the making of the film. There, in miniature, were the sets we have so long labored on this summer: the ice hangar, Bespin, Dagobah. Models of the weaponry manned by tiny, familiar figures had the look of tempting toys crafted with precision. Here was an exhibition to take one's time over—a welcome relief from the frenetic atmosphere of the convention as a whole.

In the evening I went to the awards ceremony, joining a huge audience that applauded wildly as well-known science-fiction authors mounted the podium to

make the presentations. Kurtz handed a Hugo to actor Christopher Reeve, representing the winning film, *Superman*, and as he did so someone seated near me exclaimed in anger, "Space opera! Junk movie! Nothing to do with science fiction!" Well, be that as it may, a ballot of some 5,000 members of the convention had voted for the popular movie. Success, to them, was not a dirty word.

Later, I joined a friendly group talking earnestly in one of the lounges. They ranged in age from a youth who had traveled to the conference from Seattle, to a lass from England's north country, to a wise old sage from San Francisco. For all of them it was the peak of their year, a substitute vacation, and they were a delight to meet. But one thing worried me. Was their fascination with worlds of dragons and nightmares, spaceships and stars a sort of opting out? Would they know, for example, that the past great men of futurology—Wells, Orwell, and their kind—were passionate social reformers? That *The Shape of Things to Come* is an impassioned warning to us from a man driven to the end of his tether by visions? Or realize the unhappiness of Orwell wandering threadbare around Islington in contemplation of perils that have already overtaken us?

That was what worried me as I left the conference at Brighton, passing on my way to the train station a little museum of dolls billed in gilt Gothic lettering "The Wonderful World of Fantasy, The Magic of Once Upon a Time." The museum has been on the Brighton front as long as I can remember. But who cares about Dickory Dock now? Childhood is not the same. For better or worse, there's been a cosmic growing. What will it be like in 1984? That year the convention will meet in California. Where else?

Friday, August 31

My heart sank when I learned that Meredith Kurtz planned a picnic on the bog planet for the wrap party. We have crossed the borderline between fantasy and madness, I told myself.

The set has been so uncomfortable and somewhat dangerous to work on. The unit has had to wear protective clothing and at times Kersh even donned a gas mask to prevent breathing in the set's noxious fumes. One stumbled wearing trench boots while clambering through the sunless, boggy undergrowth. Was Meredith seriously considering this place as a setting in which to host 500 people?

So, after shooting today, with the party due to begin in an hour or so, I went up to the big stage, full of apprehension. How wrong I had been!

An astonishing transformation had taken place. The lagoon area of the vast set had been spanned by a platform and this in turn had been covered with nylon "lawn." Tables festooned with candles and sprays of tiger lilies were set against the backdrop of the forest, while at the water's edge the little house of Yoda gave a charmingly folksy touch. The scene had a sense of carnival, of gaiety, of well-being, and I retreated guiltily. It had taken a lot of enthusiasm and a lot of help to set the stage so imaginatively.

Returning for the party itself, I found that the picnic motif had been sustained by the provision of little hampers of comestibles, which each guest was given on arrival. In addition, there was an abundance of food at buffet tables and a very liberal bar.

But the essential feature of the occasion was its showmanship and generosity. End-of-shooting parties can be tame or tense affairs, rituals the management feels obliged to give, and when a movie is over budget, I've known them to be penny-pinching and lacking in

any style. But there was no hint of parsimony here. This party reflected the image of a big, stylish picture and the hard work and dedication that have gone into it. The film isn't finished yet, so on Monday the bog-planet set, so artfully converted for this occasion, will be its old murky self again.

Earlier in the day I spoke with Mark and asked him whether the prospect of playing Luke Skywalker in a third *Star Wars* adventure, possibly in more films after that, was not a bit daunting.

He pondered before replying. "George Lucas is very clever," he said. "He's not going to compromise himself by making us indispensable," he said. "None of us will do a *Star Wars* picture against our will. George will see to that."

I thought this made the toymaker sound rather Machiavellian, and so I asked Mark to elaborate.

Mark Hamill: Well, look at what's happening to Harrison. He wasn't at all sure whether he wanted to repeat his role as Solo, and he's not at all committed to do it a third time. So George has left him in limbo in this one. As Lando Calrissian says after Han is hauled up from the carbon-freezing chamber: "He's in a perfect state of hibernation." So George has given himself the option. Han is not vital to future stories. It's up to Harrison, I guess, as to whether Han comes back into the saga.

Alan Arnold: Do you feel you, too, could be written out?

MH: It's already been taken care of. Ben Kenobi says to Yoda: "Luke is our only hope." Yoda shakes his head: "No," he says, "no, there is another." So, you see, George could write me out.

AA: Does that worry you?

MH: Well, it shows they're not going to let me become what Sean Connery was to the James Bond movies.

Most actors, of course, are terribly insecure at the best of times, and talking to Mark I began to realize

that he must have given a lot of thought to the matter of Luke's durability. He continued the theme.

MH: If, for some reason, I don't want to do the next one, or gave them so much trouble that they didn't want to use me, then they could easily discover a long-lost sister or brother of Luke's living in another part of the galaxy. They could just say Luke is off somewhere looking for Han Solo.

AA: I suppose they could, but Luke is pretty much of a legend by now. I don't think George Lucas is going to dispense with him in the third film.

MH: You never know. Luke can remain a legend without ever appearing again. All legends aren't living ones. It's the legend that lives on, not necessarily the character.

Monday, September 3

"Kersh," I said, finding him on the Cloud City set, "it's forty years to the day that World War II began in Europe. I don't suppose one person in ten thousand has remembered, particularly in America, do you?"

Irvin Kershner: I remember. I think it was the greatest catastrophe of all our lives, including the lives of those born afterward. It affected everyone, the living and the unborn. Whether you are Jewish or Catholic or whatever, it affected humanity and left us all different people. It was a war in which people set out to kill other people and found what were to them rational reasons for doing so. You can get people to believe anything that appears to give them unity and a sense of superiority.

Alan Arnold: Nevertheless, I doubt whether most of the people working on this soundstage today have remembered. Most of them are not old enough.

IK: Many young people today don't even understand the war's significance. It may just as well never have happened. They don't realize that they have

inherited a legacy of cruelty more terrible than in the whole of history. When the Germans swept across Europe in 1940, it was for the purpose of genocide.

AA: Is your Jewishness a source of pride in you?

IK: Pride? I think it's something different. You see, I've been a student of Christianity. I've been interested in the historical basis of the Moslem religion. I studied Buddhism. I don't think of myself as a Jew except by birth, as I don't follow the customs. I'm a Jew because other people consider me so. My pride is in being international.

AA: What about patriotism?

IK: I'm afraid of patriotism. The world has gotten very small and cosmic awareness makes patriotism seem an adolescent notion, which is why immature minds are so easily manipulated by it. I really believe that patriotism in its generally accepted sense means accepting social prejudices, and the fewer we have of them the freer we shall be.

AA: You're looking much more relaxed this morning. Is it because you are at last out of the swamp planet?

IK: Well, I'm not really pleased to have left it. I feel greatly dissatisfied with what I had to do there. It was such an expensive set to construct, yet I had to compromise all down the line while working on it.

AA: But some weeks ago you told me that the compressions George Lucas was making were in the general interest.

IK: Yes, but I had to compromise with every shot, every sequence, and although I'm sure that the audience will not detect it, in my eyes the footage we shot there is not what I hoped it would be. I had to shoot faster than I would have shot a television show, then leave the second unit to do things I would have preferred to do myself. This may sound ridiculous, but there were days when I spent eight or nine hours on the swamp planet and on one such day I got six-and-a-half seconds of film.

Six-and-a-half seconds the whole day! Yesterday, the second unit did one shot which took them ten hours, and I don't think that shot will be held on screen for more than seven seconds. That's the nature of that particular place. I won't easily forget that planet.

AA: Later this week you're leaving for California. What will you do there?

IK: First, I'll go over all the footage with the editor. We'll pick the good takes. Then I'll give him all the notes I've been making since we started shooting.

AA: What sort of notes?

IK: Notes on the pattern I shot to, suggestions for the cutting. You see, on a film as complex as this, with so many special effects, I can't get the coverage that I would get on any other picture. With so many gadgets working you can't afford to do too many takes. So I made notes and constantly checked that I didn't have any big holes in the film.

AA: No, we don't want any big holes.

Tuesday, September 4

Sometimes echoes of the sick world beyond penetrate this make-believe factory. While Kersh strove with a blue-screen shot on Bepin and Kurtz completed pick-up shots on Dagobah, a solemn procession moved slowly past the studio. It was the funeral with full military honors of a twenty-two-year-old British Army paratrooper. A local man, he had died with seventeen of his young comrades in what is now known as the Warrenpoint Massacre in Northern Ireland on the same day that Lord Mountbatten and members of his family were killed.

Nobody in England now, save die-hard bigots, really believes that these young men in Ireland are dying anything but futilely in a cause based on religious and

political expediency. These soldiers are not heroes, as the media jingoistically calls them, but tragic victims of murder—and the murderers are the politicians and the churchmen just as much as the IRA.

Historical evidence is now irrefutable to the effect that it was the blunderings and the squabbles of generals and politicians that sent ten million men to squalid deaths in the mud of Flanders sixty years ago. War hasn't changed its spots, nor have politicians, and the youngster from this suburb who was buried this afternoon was just one more innocent victim.

Angry, I could work no more. Somehow, writing about Bepin and Dagobah and the bright heroics of Luke had lost its simplistic charm. I packed up my things and sadly drove home.

Wednesday, September 5

At eight-thirty this morning a limousine brought Sir Alec Guinness to the studios; at three o'clock it drove him away. His important contribution to the film had taken mere hours. And now the last human element of the jigsaw has been slotted in—the rest are technical effects.

An hour after arriving, Sir Alec was ready on the set, looking benign in his Franciscan-style cloak and cowl, the very essence of paternal love and fortitude. When Mark arrived they reminisced for a minute or two and then went into rehearsal. Kersh had two cameras pointed toward a velvet backing before which Ben would give Luke Skywalker wise counsel.

During the rehearsal Guinness raised a hand to shade his eyes from the harsh light, fluffed twice, and winced when a camera gear slipped noisily. But during the takes his gaze was unflinching, the eyes strong and steady, and a speech that in itself had no great profundity was given the ring of wisdom.

"That's the magic of it," Kersh said to me later.

"It's the authority. He dissected every word, each gesture in a way only great actors do. It is the timbre, the subtle movements that make the difference. It's what makes actors great. Yes, we might have been able to do without him, but this man made the role his own. It's never the same if you have someone else in a role an actor like that has created."

Last evening one of the well-respected movies Sir Alec made in the postwar period, now known collectively as the Ealing comedies, was shown on BBC television. It was *The Lavender Hill Mob* in which he played a servile, trusted, and long-serving employee of the Royal Mint who masterminds the theft of a huge quantity of gold bullion and then retires on the proceeds to a life of glamour in South America. It was the kind of role (a little man nursing dreams of beating the system) that made Guinness famous in Britain years before the big international movies (*Lawrence of Arabia* and *The Bridge on the River Kwai*) brought him international celebrity, long before knighthood capped his burgeoning prestige. Today the Ealing comedies, such as *The Captain's Paradise*, *Kind Hearts and Coronets*, and *The Horse's Mouth*, are still beloved by movie buffs.

I asked Sir Alec how he felt about those Ealing comedies now.

"Damned annoyed," was his reply. "Annoyed every time they're shown. You see, I don't get residuals. Don't get a penny. Actors' contracts didn't provide for residuals then."

"The films have weathered well," I suggested.

"They were pretty good fun to make, depending on the director," he said. "As with this film, Ealing was a technician's paradise. The happiest of them for me was *Kind Hearts and Coronets*. That was enormous fun."

But it was Kersh, not I, who asked Sir Alec what medium he preferred to work in—movies, TV, or stage—for it's a question that would have alerted him to a sense of being interviewed, an impression I had been asked not to give. "It's a part of the understand-

ing with Sir Alec that we don't give him the full publicity treatment," Kurtz had told me. So he told Kersh what he would not have told a publicist, that nowadays he found acting exhausting in whatever medium.

"I get exhausted whatever I do," Guinness said. "I'm not as passionate about it any more. A long stage run is the most exhausting of all. The shorter the contract the better these days. As T.S. Eliot once said about writing, 'Every sentence is a struggle. You know you're not going to get it quite right, but you have to go ahead and try.' That applies just as much to acting."

And then Sir Alec, at sixty-eight "or thereabouts" the youngest of Britain's actor-knights, returned to the set. One day's work was nearly over. In less than a single day he had earned a small fortune—but at the price of a lifetime of experience.

Monday, September 10

The show is almost over. The crew worked into Friday evening to get the last shots involving Mark on the bog planet—the scene of Luke's X-wing being levitated out of the swamp by the power of the Force. Though work on this set is continuing today, a stunt double is being used for Luke.

After these punishing weeks, the set itself is beginning to show signs of attrition—the fiberglass forest is flaking, the undergrowth wilting from the effect of heat, wind, water, and tread of trench-booted feet. Kersh told me he had come to be "swamp oriented" after so long in this jungle of the mind. He had learned to survive on Dagobah but, like Livingstone returning from Africa to Victorian London, he felt he had lost his bearings in civilization. "I feel out of place in my apartment," he said. "That wretched set has become home!"

Two months ago, when the movie seemed to be in a critical stage, I likened it to a voyage and I think the metaphor holds. For there is a feel now of a journey ended, of disembarkation. The crew has dispersed; sets once so intricate and bold have been dismantled; props, costumes, and hardware are being crated for the warehouse; and new faces crowd the walkways, replacing those that had become so familiar. The names of Jack Nicholson, Diane Keaton, and Warren Beatty have replaced those of Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford, and Carrie Fisher on dressing-room doors. The world of moviemaking is a continuous performance.

Now that the tempo has wound down and the beat is muffled, some moments from the past crowd in on the memory. I think of Harrison's arrival at Finse, of Carrie in high dudgeon during the stresses of the carbon-freezing-chamber scenes, of Mark impassive while lethal missiles were fired just feet from him, of Kurtz's quiet tenacity, and Kersh's patience and enthusiasm. And I remember the weather in Norway.

But when you look back on a film, you're apt to wonder why—why did it all seem so important at the time? The world beyond this house of make-believe didn't really care; it went about its daily life innocent and unaware. I sometimes wonder what it is that makes us in the film business believe in ourselves. A truism intrinsic to every creative act applies equally to moviemaking: If you don't believe in it yourself, nobody else will. Sam Goldwyn once said, "I'll make my movies to please myself," and George Lucas said more or less the same thing to me. It's an egotism, of course, but isn't all creativity?

MARIN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Monday, October 29

The Marin County peninsula points south toward San Francisco's waterfront and is linked to it by the Golden Gate Bridge. Thus it has a coastline on the Pacific as well as one on San Francisco Bay. On the bay side, the peninsula is marked by creeks and inlets and small picturesque harbors, many of which are the settings for some spectacular apartment complexes with their own marinas. Because Marin County has experienced a huge increase in its population during the past twenty-five years, highways have proliferated and with them the inevitable extrusions of a highly mobile society: shopping centers, all manner of eating places, gas stations, used-car lots, and so forth—their common denominator being easy access for the automobile. As with anywhere else, the environment of the freeways is often ugly, a hapless embroidery in the midst of which there are some pleasant little towns with attractive names: Mill Valley, San Anselmo, Tiburon, San Rafael, Corte Madera, Larkspur. And above the bay on a ledge where the fabled bridge completes its audacious leap from the city is Sausalito, a beautiful little township built among the pines and cypress of the cliffside, with one of the best views of the San Francisco skyline.

San Anselmo I found to be a charmingly nostalgic and primly beautiful town. In the afternoon of a sunlit Sunday, I sat at a timbered café beside a little wooden bridge spanning a brook. The café had the feel of countless yesterdays, thus I was surprised to learn

that it had been built in 1975. Similarly, where there had been a drugstore soda fountain, there was now an ice-cream parlor called the Sweet Sensation where some very young teenagers lingered with their girlfriends ritualizing over milkshakes. A fine double-fronted store that had once dispensed seeds and hardware to local growers was now a classy emporium selling costly porcelain, glass, and silverware imported from England, Germany, and France.

It is in San Anselmo that George Lucas has his editing facility in a building just off the main street. He lives on the outskirts of the town among the pines and the redwoods. It was there I visited him for a final interview, and we talked in a study paneled with natural redwood and heated by a pinewood fire. When we had finished, he drove me back to my lodgings in a well-worn twelve-year-old Chevrolet, hardly a symbol of status nor a deliberate exercise in underconsumption, simply the car Lucas had grown to be comfortable with.

As we parted, I suggested to him that it was possible in an environment such as Marin County to become remote from the problems of the world. But he denied that there was any risk of becoming self-centered in his retreat. "If I want a super-stimulating environment I can always fly to New York," he said. "There's stimulation in San Francisco and we are only an hour's flight from L.A. Such cities have all the social evils and social blessings of our day. I don't have to live there to be aware of them."

"Do you keep in touch with filmmakers around the world and see their films?" I asked.

"There is a film archive in Berkeley which gets films from all over the world. We see films and sometimes meet with filmmakers, but I keep in touch more by involvement. Now that we've finished the fine cut on *Empire*, I'm leaving for Japan. I'm executive producer of a film being directed there by Kurosawa. But I'll always return to Marin. It's where I have a sense of belonging."

It was to be the last of our meetings. I left more

impressed than ever by George Lucas's essential simplicity. In his woodland setting he seemed a figure from a fairy tale, a puck in an elfin landscape.

Alan Arnold: What drew you to Marin County?

George Lucas: When I graduated from college in Los Angeles, I knew I didn't want to stay there. I decided I would come back to northern California and work here. But I had to have a link to an airport so I could go to Los Angeles to conduct my business. My wife and I looked on the peninsula near Palo Alto and San Jose, and then looked up here in Marin and decided we liked it well enough to settle here.

AA: What do you like about it?

GL: I like Marin's rural quality. Yet we're not far from the city, so we can go into San Francisco for cultural events or for business.

AA: What is the extent of your holdings in Marin County?

GL: We have three offices in San Anselmo including an editing room. In San Rafael we have Industrial Light and Magic. What we're trying to do is build the ranch facility which will consolidate all these units in one place. Then we won't be spread over the countryside the way we are now.

AA: The ranch is Lucas Valley, a 2,000-acre holding. Is the fact that it is called Lucas Valley pure coincidence?

GL: Yes. It was already named Lucas Valley, and it was the only piece of land that seemed appropriate for our needs and financially within my reach. It's also an easy distance from San Francisco. It only takes about seven minutes longer to get to the ranch from the city than to get to San Anselmo.

AA: When the ranch scheme materializes will you lack anything Los Angeles can provide?

GL: We won't have soundstages. The ranch is purely a "think tank" concept and largely an environment in which writers can create. It will have a library, editing rooms, a place to do the music and the rerecording. It will not be a place to make movies

but to write and finish them. Mostly, it will be a place to think.

AA: What is the setting like?

GL: It's classic Marin County country, hilly with redwood forests and its own meadow.

AA: What other filmmakers are located in Marin?

GL: In Mill Valley there's John Korty who was really the first one to come to Marin County. Then there's Michael Ritchie, who grew up in Berkeley and decided to move to Marin. Matt Robbins and Hal Barwood moved up here from Los Angeles. Walter Murch came up with me and with Francis Coppola to start the American Zoetrope Company. Phil Kaufman and several filmmakers live in San Francisco. I think it would be breaking it down too regionally to say that Marin County is separate from San Francisco in the filmmaking world. It would be better to describe us all as northern California filmmakers. As a group we have all traded ideas and helped each other over the years.

AA: Tell me more about the overall concept of the *Star Wars* saga.

GL: There are essentially nine films in a series of three trilogies. The first trilogy is about the young Ben Kenobi and the early life of Luke's father when Luke was a little boy. This trilogy takes place some twenty years before the second trilogy which includes *Star Wars* and *Empire*. About a year or two passes between each story of the trilogy and about twenty years pass between the trilogies. The entire saga spans about fifty-five years.

AA: How much is written?

GL: I have story treatments on all nine. I also have voluminous notes, histories, and other material I've developed for various purposes. Some of it will be used, some not. Originally, when I wrote *Star Wars*, it developed into an epic on the scale of *War and Peace*, so big I couldn't possibly make it into a movie. So I cut it in half, but it was still too big, so I cut each half into three parts. I then had material for six movies. After the success of *Star Wars*

I added another trilogy but stopped there, primarily because reality took over. After all, it takes three years to prepare and make a *Star Wars* picture. How many years are left? So I'm still left with three trilogies of nine films. At two hours each, that's about eighteen hours of film!

AA: What will the next chapter be?

GL: The next chapter is called "Revenge of the Jedi." It's the end of this particular trilogy, the conclusion of the conflict begun in *Star Wars* between Luke and Darth Vader. It resolves that situation once and for all. I won't say who survives and who doesn't, but if we are ever able to link together all three you'd find the story progresses in a very logical fashion.

MARIN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Friday, November 2

It was good seeing Kersh again this morning. He invited me to drive with him to the Kurtzes' house in Sausalito where, he told me, he intended to go through their record collection. Knowing the Kurtzes to be in Los Angeles for a few days, I wondered what whim had prompted him to embark on so nefarious a mission.

As we drove it was clear that the director was in an uplifted mood, born no doubt out of relief at having the grueling months at the studios safely behind him and being on home ground again. As we turned off the freeway and onto the road that winds steeply up to the little hillside town, he seemed to find everything a source of joy. "Clouds!" he suddenly ex-

claimed. "Aren't they beautiful? Just look at the composition." I rather wished that he would keep his eyes firmly on the twisting road.

We turned into the Kurtzes' drive and saw a house that springs out from its driveway like a jack-in-the-box because it is built on ledges that overlook the bay. Its multilevel interior leads down to an octagonal room of book-clad walls with comfortable lounging chairs around an open fireplace, and the rear windows offer that wonderful view. I sat back to enjoy it.

Behind me, Kersh had begun to rummage, picking out one LP after another from the shelves that framed the stereo. He played only bits of them, and as the pace of his selection grew more frenzied my musical sensibilities were treated to a most unfeeling assault. In the space of minutes he had played and rejected snatches from Stravinsky and Shostakovich, Hindemith and Copland, Prokofiev and Bliss. Recalling the strain he had been under, I began to wonder if Kersh had become a shade unbalanced.

Then there was silence. . . .

I looked around and saw him smiling. He appeared quite satiated. Clutching a weighty pile of records, he indicated that we were leaving. Soon we were speeding down the hill to regain the anonymity of the freeway. I felt I was an accomplice in a burglary.

"Are you satisfied with what you found?" I asked with some delicacy.

"You can never get exactly what you want the first time," he replied. "I may have to go back there."

"What are you going to do with the records?" I asked, wondering at what seemed a strange obsession.

He was leaning forward, looking for a turnoff. "What? Oh, yes, I'll use them to make a temp track," he answered, then noticing my mystification he continued: "You see, John Williams is coming in from Los Angeles to view the film, and I want it to have a temporary music track when he sees it. It may help him to know where we feel music will be most effective."

"Surely it could act the other way and overly influence him."

"No, it won't make the slightest difference," he said. "John has a strong feel for what he wants."

As we turned a corner, one record slipped from the pile and I saw that it was the Prokofiev score for Eisenstein's film *October*.

"Well, that, I suppose, was the prototype of all film music," I said.

But Kersh had lost interest and was apparently intent on the sky again.

MARIN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Saturday, November 3

Kersh wants me to have a Japanese meal with him and then talk on tape for the last time. I accept and at 6 P.M. meet him at the editing facility in San Anselmo. I don't enjoy the Japanese restaurant he takes me to; I cannot digest pork fried in nettles. He says I should become a vegetarian, and I tell him I prefer to cook my own meals and dislike eating in public. It is ungracious, I know, but I am really intent on getting the interview done. So we get in Kersh's car and drive to a tree-lined street and the house Kersh is renting during his stay in Marin County.

Once we arrived, our interview went like this:

Alan Arnold: You seem to be using this splendid Marin County house simply as a place to hang your clothes in and go to work from. It must help to crystallize your work to be free of impediments.

Irvin Kershner: In some ways I'm free, in other ways I'm not. I still have the responsibility of a family,

even though I'm not living with them. I still need to see my children. But I do spend a lot of time alone now, which for many years I never had the luxury of doing. I like it. An island at Puget Sound is my retreat.

AA: How did you find it?

IK: Some of my closest friends come from the Vancouver area, and I was invited up there about twenty years ago to go salmon fishing. I fell in love with the island. A few years later a piece of land with a house came on the market and I bought it. I've never regretted it. My children have spent every summer there since they were born. It's their spiritual home. Los Angeles is their physical home.

AA: Do you feel there is a risk in the film business of losing what is most precious to the demands of work?

IK: Very much so. It's been a concern of mine for years. There are two places in America where people are in particular danger of becoming narcissistic, of feeling alienated, of needing love but not being able to love. The two places are Los Angeles and Washington. Both attract people seeking power, and power corrupts the soul. Power is dangerous, and I think it causes one to become less of an artist, if you can call anyone in a mass media an artist. An artist is someone so individual, so unique that what he does no one else could do. That's not true in film. A director may have a personal vision, but somebody else can step in and finish the film. It would be done slightly differently, that's all. In film there are interconnected parts: the scriptwriter, the director, the art director, and so on. Artistry is involved, but I don't believe filmmakers are artists in the sense that a writer starting with a blank page or a painter with a blank canvas is an artist.

AA: But surely you have tried to direct this film with an artist's integrity.

IK: It doesn't bother me whether I can describe myself as an artist or not, but I feel that George Lucas is one, a conceptual artist in a very profound

way. That doesn't necessarily mean that his work is profound. I wouldn't attempt to judge it. But he is an artist; he is unique in what he does. When I undertook this project, I set certain limits for myself: I would make this film from a script I helped to polish and would try to maintain the rhythm started by the first film, but my film would be different. I set guidelines for myself, and within those guidelines I wanted to be as free and as creative as possible. It was like undertaking to paint a canvas without the full range of colors, but within that limitation infinite variations were possible since all art deals with restriction and resistance.

AA: George Lucas spoke to me about "Revenge of the Jedi." Would you be interested in directing it?

IK: The *Star Wars* saga is George's life. It is the thing that he has created. I came in on an interim basis. I'd like to do a film that represents more of my own attitudes.

AA: What sort of film would that be?

IK: I'd like to do a film I've conceived myself. That would be the ideal. Alternatively, I would like to find a project compatible with where the process of living has taken me. I'm an inconsistent person. Sometimes I become very mystical, at other times pragmatic. At still other times I tell myself I believe in nothing, question everything. I thought there was something wrong with me until I began to read Zen.

AA: What do you feel about San Francisco and the Bay Area as a creative environment?

IK: It's a charming community. While I have a need for big cities—London, Paris, New York, even Los Angeles—I also need to walk through woods or sit at the edge of water, to do nothing, not even think. So I need both city and landscape. Most people need both, but it's especially important in our kind of work. George has surrounded himself with his company. It is like a family to him, a big family because his work force is huge. I have felt great peace in being one of the family for a year. I've met marvelous people in Marin County and in San

Francisco. But I've felt at times a need to get away, to see people I really don't *want* to see—all the agents, the hangers-on, the people who are the real destroyers. I need both—the good and the phony. Otherwise how could I tell one from the other?

AA: If you had *Empire* to direct over again, would you do anything differently?

IK: Almost everything! I would make a different picture if I were starting now. That doesn't invalidate what I think I've done, it's just that I've learned so much in the process. I now know things that I'm shocked I didn't know when I started.

AA: Were you at times a lonely man during the shooting?

IK: I am never lonely. There's a difference between being lonely and being alone, a big difference. I spent a lot of time alone in order to concentrate on the script, but I was never lonely. I have lots of people in my life. I felt a pride in the picture, a great responsibility because I know what it meant to George because of the way it was financed.

AA: Which of your past films have satisfied you most?

IK: Some of the smaller ones. I think *The Luck of Ginger Coffey* spoke of the human condition and is a sensitive film. I thought *Return of a Man Called Horse* was important and I loved *Loving*. I thought *The Flim-Flam Man* was a good piece of Americana, an American folk opera without music. I feel these films were underrated. I thought *Up the Sandbox* was underrated, too. Women's liberation was an unpopular subject at the time, and people expected something different from Barbra Streisand.

MARIN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Monday, November 5

The misuse of amplified sound is one of the curses of urban life, it seems to me. It is very difficult today in a city to find a habitation that isn't vulnerable to somebody else's amplified sounds, be they from a stereo system or from a TV. Moreover, it is a fact verified by research that a generation has arisen that is conditioned to pitches of volume that once would have been considered atrocious. A more violent sonic climate is the norm, possibly in preparation for the big bang that will silence even the music of the stars.

Of course, there is a vast difference between true sound and mere noise.

These thoughts came to mind following my meeting today with Ben Burt, Lucasfilm's sound-effects supervisor. We talked in his superbly equipped audio studio in San Anselmo, and it was a treat to talk to this young man who loves sound passionately and knows the value of silence. Our meeting seemed to relieve a day that had not been the happiest for him. John Williams and his arranger had been shown the movie sequence by sequence as a necessary preliminary to composing the musical score. Together with George Lucas, Irvin Kershner, and Gary Kurtz, they had "spotted" the film, to use the technical term, to discern where music would be most effective. But Burt thinks of the non-musical sound—the sound effects—as being an essential part of the total score. He was dismayed, therefore, not to have been involved in this conference.

He knows, of course, that John Williams has to

compose nearly two hours of music for the film, leaving little room for the nonmusical sound effects Burt has been devising with such dedication. But he holds no rancor with John Williams; he simply feels that filmmakers often downgrade sound in favor of music largely because of music's more emotional qualities.

I am not competent to comment on Burt's argument that the sound-effects specialist and the composer should work in collaboration from the very start. I only know that he holds the conviction that sound is a highly creative element in a movie and is not given its rightful amount of credit. Well, I've heard that from many departments in my time—I have even heard it from publicity. It all adds up to this: Films are made by many hands. In theory, all these dedicated artisans should be equal; in fact, some are more equal than others. Which is also true of life.

Alan Arnold: *Star Wars* was full of sound, including sounds I hadn't heard before.

Ben Burt: Yes, that's the difference with space fantasy. The galaxy created for the *Star Wars* saga is filled with imaginary vehicles, imaginary pieces of equipment, imaginary life forms. Their sounds are unlike the sounds on our own planet. So you start with a clean slate. In an average film you look at what is in the movie: an ocean, animals, realistic creatures, familiar things, and you know what they sound like. But in space fantasy the work becomes much more abstract. Your imagination can take much greater leaps. You are not limited by what people are expecting. Sound in fantasy can function somewhat like music. You can decide what emotional reactions you want to create.

AA: You are not limited by conventions?

BB: Well, some elements remain conventional. People walking on the deck of a spaceship, vehicles traveling in snow, a blizzard—those fall into the spectrum of conventional sound, but this story calls for abstract concepts, too. When I started on *Star Wars*, I was hired to develop a library of sounds that could be useful to stories set in space. So for

a year I recorded sounds I thought might prove interesting.

AA: Can you give examples?

BB: George was interested in developing creature voices, sounds for strange life forms such as the Wookiee, the Sandpeople, the Jawas, so I went to zoos and farms and recorded animals. I also rented animals from trainers. I recorded birds, insects, whales, dolphins. I started to stockpile all this material and to build a library. For the vehicles, I recorded aircraft jets. I also recorded all sorts of weapons, artillery, military planes, bombing and strafing effects, all kinds of action sounds I felt would be useful.

AA: In *Star Wars* you avoided the clichés associated with space. We didn't get celestial sounds when we saw myriads of stars and we were spared the monotone voices associated with robots. How did you avoid these traps?

BB: George Lucas and I agreed that electronic sound had been overused in fantasy and space films. We decided to use organic sounds instead, sounds derived from real sources that people would accept as real. Actual sounds—bulldozers, landslides, trains—really have a lot of character to them. By using real sounds as raw material, we could achieve an effect more realistic than if we used synthesizers. I took a lot of joy in trying to analyze the equipment and the creatures George had created. I wanted to know what powered this or that device, what kind of mouth or lungs this or that creature had. Knowing those things was important to conceiving of the sound it would make.

AA: The laser swords in *Star Wars* made a remarkable new sound. How did you originate it?

BB: There had to be an electronic feel to that sound. I wanted the swords to seem dangerous, as if they might easily electrocute, cut through, or burn someone. The sounds that were mixed for them were electrical hums and the sounds of a TV picture tube between channels, all greatly magnified.

AA: How do you produce the effect of something so monstrously noisy as the destruction of a planet, as you did in *Star Wars*?

BB: At one point we were going to have no sound at all. Then we thought of having just a huge flash, followed sometime afterward with a loud, conventional explosion. None of these ideas really seemed to work. A planet blowing up is out of our comprehension. What would it sound like? We eventually used a combination of several military explosions, thunder, and impact on metal. It was—like most of our sounds—a mixture of artifice and invention.

AA: There are times in movies when silence is more effective than sound. That applies to the music, too. Do you work closely with John Williams?

BB: You have touched on a very sensitive issue. The ideal sound track for any picture, in my opinion, would be one in which the music and sound effects were totally integrated, but in the film business, sound editors and composers work in isolation from one another.

AA: That's wrong, isn't it?

BB: Totally wrong. I think of sound as a form of music. I love music and understand its role in film, but it is wrong that sound should be conceived of separately from the music score.

AA: You feel that sound effects are as much a part of the score as the music?

BB: I look at it that way. When I worked on *Invasion of the Bodysnatchers* the composer on that picture had never worked on a film before, so it was a chance for me to establish a working relationship with him. I developed the sound for several segments of the film and he came over and watched them. We sat down together and discussed how the sound worked with the images. Then he went back and composed music which surrounded and echoed the sounds just beautifully. As a result, you can't quite tell what is music and what is sound. It was completely integrated and for that kind of picture

it worked very well. It created a lot of dramatic tension.

AA: What led you to become interested in sound?

BB: As a hobby I made films while still in high school. In college I shot and edited my own little films. I found it rewarding to put sound on my own films. It was exciting to see what sound could do as a creative element. I majored in physics and was going to be a scientist but couldn't get over my fascination with film. I enrolled in the University of Southern California film department and got a degree in production, but I sensed a vacuum in the area of sound. No one seemed interested in specializing in that area. The only people going into sound saw it as a step to something else, but I felt sort of dedicated to it. Gary Kurtz heard about me and hired me to develop a sound library for *Star Wars*.

AA: After that?

BB: I worked on *Bodysnatchers* here in Marin County for Phil Kaufman. Then I went to England and worked on *Alien*. I thought the music and the sound effects were well integrated in *Alien*, too.

AA: In the *Star Wars* pictures do the Imperial forces have a characteristic sound pattern that differs from that of the Rebels?

BB: Yes. With the Rebels we try to be much more everyday, more functional and realistic. For example, inside the *Millennium Falcon* things sound very loose and rusty; they rattle as if they are just bolted together loosely. But the Empire sound image is more organized, more martial.

AA: How do you give a sound to a creature that isn't earthly, like Chewbacca?

BB: Well, Chewbacca's voice is composed of fragments of many different animal sounds: bears, badgers, camels, and other mammal sounds from my collection.

AA: Do you agree that people today are becoming conditioned to greater levels of sound?

BB: Young people especially are conditioned to a large stimulus of sound around them. They are in

the habit of relaxing by playing something overly loud. That's a form of pollution. What people forget is that you can only absorb so much sound. The ear has a certain spectrum. Volume for the sake of sheer volume is nonsense. Sound is a coloring element. It should be used with subtlety.

MARIN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Wednesday, November 7

My base here is a motel in the Marin township of Corte Madera, in the heart of Lucas country; San Anselmo and San Rafael are within easy reach. San Rafael is where George Lucas filmed much of *American Graffiti* and where one of his most remarkable brainchilds is now established—Industrial Light and Magic.

The factory-style building that houses ILM and where some seventy people are employed gives no outward hint of a connection with show business. Yet the building contains a film studio in miniature where about one-fifth of *The Empire Strikes Back* will have been filmed—without actors. In the reception area the only feature to suggest that the company's product is unusual is a colored plaque showing a figure in top hat and tails waving a wand, unmistakably a magician. It is the trademark of this house of magic.

In ILM's workshops and laboratories are technicians, whose average age must be under thirty, working with that air of abstraction characteristic of the scientific mind. They seem unhurried, absorbed in detail; they confer with one another fraternally. At the end of the day they are replaced by a night shift that works

to complete the filming of scenes that have no earthly counterpart. Where could you go to shoot the destruction of a star or film monstrous animallike machines trudging across an infinity of snow? Only here is that possible, for this is where the barely imaginable is brought to life—all accomplished by stretching technology to its furthest reach.

On my visit I saw work proceeding on the film's miniatures and opticals, and on the stop-motion animation for scenes with animal and mechanical creatures. An exceptionally complex sequence showing the *Millennium Falcon* flying through an asteroid belt pursued by Imperial TIE fighters was being meticulously crafted. I was able to view some clips from this sequence when George Lucas joined his team in the screening room. Although it seemed to me an incredible achievement, the technicians were not satisfied. The spaceship was not maneuvering to their complete satisfaction, so they talked the problem over in their complex terminology, and at the end of the discussion they all returned to their benches and drawing boards.

This was filmmaking of a kind I had never seen before. I am sure that if I had visited the Disney studios at the height of the cartoon feature's popularity, I would have been similarly thrilled, but I would have understood the technical expertise. Here, though, was space-age technology employing pure science and no less impressive for being beyond my grasp. Computerized cameras, rotoscoping, laser animation, garbage mattes, animatics were merely terms to me, but this, I knew, was the special-effects technology that made *Star Wars* a spellbinder and moved technical effects forward to a point far beyond that reached by any predecessor. Now, in 1979, these special-effects wizards had four years of development behind them. I came away bedazzled.

On returning to my room I picked up D. J. Wenden's *The Birth of the Movies* and read an account of how another filmmaker approached the matter of making space movies. "Georges Méliès," the account began,

"combined the skills of magician with those of trick cameraman to produce fantasy and adventure films which told intricate stories in a style which only the cinema could produce. People disappeared mysteriously, strange ghost-like apparitions emerged, animals changed into human beings and flew through the air. Méliès developed the technical tricks of the cinema. . . . His most famous film, *A Trip to the Moon*, is halfway between the science fiction of Jules Verne and the televised lunar exploration of Neil Armstrong. He showed the astronauts planning the trip, constructing a projectile, being shot off to the moon, landing in the eye of the man in the moon (causing it to weep a large tear), descending into a lunar crater, being attacked by the inhabitants, fleeing and splashing down in the sea and sinking to the bottom. The film ended with their ultimate retrieval and a triumphant processional parade."

But, you see, Georges Méliès made his film in 1902. O pioneers!

LOS ANGELES

Saturday, November 17

The message sent to my hotel by the music department of Twentieth Century-Fox stated that John Williams would see me at his home at 6:30 P.M. for cocktails. In order to be punctual, I arranged for a cab to be outside the hotel at 6:00 P.M., having been assured that the house was not far from where I was staying. So, after giving the driver the address, I settled comfortably in the cab to reflect on the questions I intended to put to the distinguished film composer.

Darkness hid the University of California campus as we climbed into those fabled hills and canyons where the superstars live.

We had been traveling for twenty minutes or so when the driver, obviously ill at ease, pulled over to the curb and with the aid of a flashlight began to consult a street directory. Considerately, he turned off the meter. "I'm not going to charge you for any further mileage because I'm lost," he said. "I've driven in L.A. for over twenty years, but I just can't find this street."

I told him not to fret, that we still had ten minutes and that I was sure he would soon get his bearings. We set off again, climbing the winding leafy roads that overlook West Los Angeles and passing homes of unsurpassable grandeur. These homes were architecturally fascinating in that they ranged the whole gamut of styles: neoclassical with stately porticos, Spanish ranch-style, mock English Tudor with leaded windows, Swiss chalets, and so forth. But all without exception had a rather forbidding air, for each was walled and gated against intruders so severely as to appear impenetrable.

I had no doubt we were passing homes that guarded the privacy of some of the great stars of past and present, that if only I could enter those genteel mansions I would find perhaps James Stewart sipping an evening cocktail or Rock Hudson seated beside a blazing log fire. While I fantasized, my good-natured driver was nearing distraction, for our destination still eluded him and it was approaching seven o'clock.

In England in a similar situation I would have expected him to stop and ask the way of a passing pedestrian, but these hills of affluence were entirely devoid of people. Spotting a magnificent home where lights blazed in all the rooms and several fine limousines stood in the driveway, I suggested that we stop there and ask for neighborly direction, but the driver at once demurred, pointing to a notice proclaiming that patrol dogs were loose in the grounds.

The driver at this point had given up the search

and was speedily driving back to my hotel. We were almost there when he suddenly slowed down. He had found the street we had so frantically been seeking. Soon I was ringing the doorbell of John Williams's pleasant, unostentatious home.

Williams himself opened the door and took me to his study, a comfortable room with many plaques on the walls testifying to best-selling records, and trophies and awards on every shelf and surface. Impressed by this room of glittering prizes, I was about to explain my lateness when he himself apologized. The house was being redecorated, he explained, and he was sorry that the room was in such disorder. But I could see no flaw; it was in a state of absolute neatness. The only evidence I could detect of refurbishment was a bolt of expensive brocade that lay neatly on a low table. Nevertheless, he apologized for the muddle.

He showed me other rooms, including a music room with a white grand piano, then we settled in his study and I talked to John Williams about his work.

Alan Arnold: You have a tremendous amount of music to compose for *The Empire Strikes Back* in a matter of weeks.

John Williams: Yes. *Empire* will require 107 minutes of underscore, although some of this will involve quotes from my original score for *Star Wars*. We plan to reprise the *Star Wars* March, for example. But I will still have about 102 minutes of new music to write between now and mid-January. You could say it's the equivalent of several Lisztian tone poems.

AA: Or a couple of symphonies.

JW: Yes, except that it's not really a fair comparison, because this kind of incidental music is quicker to write than an organic piece like a symphony.

AA: Would you describe yourself as a romantic composer?

JW: Film composing is a very special kind of craft and you have to adapt your style constantly. So when you ask if I am a romantic, I have to answer

that in doing incidental music for films one has to be a chameleon. My nonfilm music—my more serious efforts at composition—is far less romantic than my film scores.

AA: Do you sometimes feel that your work for films takes time away from other things you would like to do?

JW: Yes. Film composers can be frustrated fellows. Usually, like me, they not only write for film but do their own composition outside of it. I think that's important. Nevertheless, I wouldn't want to give up my film work because I think it is a wonderful medium for a composer. Millions of people go to the cinema, and it's stimulating to hear people whistling your tunes. That is a wonderfully supportive thing. I fully recognize, however, that easy popularization is something that can be damaging to any desire you may have to be considered a serious composer.

AA: There are many examples of respected composers such as Johann Strauss whose work has survived and who were popular in their own day.

JW: I agree. The public taste needn't always be mistrusted. If the public likes something, that doesn't necessarily mean it's inferior.

AA: What new themes are you developing for *The Empire Strikes Back*?

JW: There is a new theme for Yoda, the teacher of the Jedi Knights. His theme begins in a kind of piquant way and develops into a more profound, more noble piece. There will be a new theme that could be called the Love Theme developing from the love interest between Princess Leia and Han. There will be a new piece of music for Darth Vader who plays a more important role in this film. In *Star Wars* he had what you could call a musical fragment, but in the new picture there will be a Grand Imperial March. In addition to those three principal themes there is new thematic material for the ice-planet battle sequences. The Force Theme from *Star Wars* will be more widely used and de-

veloped. Finally, the *Star Wars* March, which is associated with Luke and the good side of the Force, will be newly presented.

AA: How do you get your inspiration?

JW: I suppose the unconscious mind works all the time on one's problems. Sometimes themes come very painfully after hours of holding my head in my hands at the piano. Days can go by and I'll think it is never going to come. Then I'll sit down at the piano and it sort of pops into my mind. After two weeks of frustration it just appears out of nowhere. Other times I might think about a theme for a character and get it straight off. It is a strange and mysterious and frustrating process, almost impossible to describe.

AA: With *Star Wars*, *Superman*, and *Close Encounters* you have had an amazing series of successes. Isn't there a limit to the amount of film music one can compose in such a relatively short time?

JW: I would like to rest after *Empire*. I have some concerts to conduct, and I find conducting more invigorating and energizing than anything else. But I like to feel that my composing improves all the time. I don't say that in an egotistical way. I am not a religious man, but I think the source of our inspiration is infinite. So it's not a question of how much one writes, but of being convinced that there is steady improvement. The longer one lives and experiences, the more there is to draw on creatively.

AA: What would you cite as your influences in composing the scores for the *Star Wars* films?

JW: My influences, like those of all musicians, come from a wide range of sources and I acknowledge them freely. In the case of *Star Wars* I made a conscious decision to try to model and shape the score on late nineteenth century, romantic orchestral scores. The idea was that the music should have a familiar emotional ring so that as you looked at those strange robots and other unearthly creatures, at sights hitherto unseen, the music would be rooted in familiar traditions.

AA: I suppose that in being as prolific as you have been the danger of repeating yourself is always there.

JW: Yes, I suppose so. In a way, one is always a bit haunted by one's own music. Occasionally, while I am working, a phrase may pop into my mind from something I wrote ten or more years ago. Memory traces are a strong part of everything we do. Inevitably, every composer has characteristic themes that recur and personify his work. Film composing is very different from composing for the concert hall; it is bound to be more repetitious. For the *Star Wars* films I have had to write active music which can be orchestrated with a flourish, a lot of decoration, a quick tempo. As these are heroic films, the music necessarily reflects the heroic element. It must underlie the emotional content and have an epic sweep to it. It's not a crutch but a sustaining element in films of this kind—and it's very stimulating to compose.

I must confess that as I left John Williams's elegant home, I had the *Star Wars* March theme in my head. It has become so much a standard that I've heard it played everywhere, including by military bands in London's parks—and no doubt bands play it in similar situations all over the world.

It will cost something like a quarter of a million dollars to record John Williams's new score with the London Symphony Orchestra, taking into account the fees of the arrangers, the musicians, the copyists, and the sound-recording crew. But all that and more will be recouped by the four-sided LP which the Robert Stigwood Organization will issue when the movie opens.

It is big business, but like everything else in entertainment it has to start with an idea. So I left Williams among his trophies, in that precise home he considered so askew, hoping that a fragment of a theme might strike a cranial membrane and take root, and that a year hence I would hear its realization as I strolled along the Champs-Élysées or fed the ducks in Regent's

Park. I might even have contributed to the process, I told myself, by arriving late and suspending him in a vacuum. It is in the suspended moments, when time tempts you into thinking it is standing still, that creative seeds are sewn. Thus it gave me some sense of purpose to refuse his offer to drive me back to my hotel. I would walk, I told him firmly. Besides, I suspected that I had to go little farther than just across the road.

Postscript

Looking back over this journal, I feel that more than anything else it defines and reflects my deepest attitudes toward the film business. As someone who has been involved in this industry for more than thirty years, I have never considered it nor the people who work in it to be particularly glamorous. True, the public is inclined to believe that the film work force offers jobs less humdrum than most, colored by contact with personalities and places others merely dream of. But whether in the studios or on location, film crews work long hours for pay not much higher than that of other professionals. And, as free-lance workers, they have no long-term security nor company pension at the end of their working lives.

But, for all that, it is undeniably a special business. In it people come together to create a product that may become legendary, or totally forgotten, or—as is more usual—simply run-of-the-mill despite all the hard work and dedication that went into it.

Recently, I strolled down Hollywood Boulevard in

Los Angeles and found myself reflecting on the history of the motion picture. For there, on that Hollywood sidewalk, are inscribed the names of many of the stars of the past. Many of these earliest stars are now nearly forgotten, although the history of the cinema is just a fragment of man's history. But since the turn of this century, when pictures first began to move, many untold thousands have been involved in furthering this most collaborative of arts from the primitive days of the nickelodeon to these days of the astonishing multimillion-dollar, special-effects productions.

And it is to these people who make films such a warm and exciting business that this journal is dedicated. The film business has its class structures and its hierarchies, but of all such systems it is the one that comes closest to being based on something worthwhile—largely, if not completely, this is a structure based on talent. No amount of financing, packaging, or promotion is a substitute for the plain fact that in the beginning is the word, the idea—it all begins with once upon a time.

STAR THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK WARTM

CAST

Luke Skywalker	MARK HAMILL
Han Solo	HARRISON FORD
Princess Leia	CARRIE FISHER
Lando Calrissian	BILLY DEE WILLIAMS
See-Threepio (C-3PO)	ANTHONY DANIELS
Darth Vader	DAVID PROWSE
Chewbacca	PETER MAYHEW
Artoo-Detoo (R2-D2)	KENNY BAKER
Yoda	FRANK OZ
Ben (Obi-Wan) Kenobi	ALEC GUINNESS
Boba Fett	JEREMY BULLOCH
Lando's Aide	JOHN HOLLIS
Chief Ugnaught	JACK PURVIS
Snow Creature	DES WEBB
Performing Assistant for Yoda	KATHRYN MULLEN
Voice of Emperor	CLIVE REVILL

IMPERIAL FORCES

Admiral Piett	KENNETH COLLEY
General Veers	JULIAN GLOVER
Admiral Ozzel	MICHAEL SHEARD
Captain Needa	MICHAEL CULVER
Other Officers ...	JOHN DICKS, MILTON JOHNS, MARK JONES, OLIVER MAGUIRE, ROBIN SCOBAY

ONCE UPON A GALAXY

REBEL FORCES

General Rieekan BRUCE BOA
Zev (Rogue 2) CHRISTOPHER MALCOM
Wedge (Rogue 3) DENNIS LAWSON
Hobbie (Rogue 4) RICHARD OLDFIELD
Dak (Luke's Gunner) JOHN MORTON
Janson (Wedge's Gunner) IAN LISTON
Major Derlin JOHN RATZENBERGER
Deck Lieutenant JACK McKENZIE
Head Controller JERRY HARTE
Other Officers NORMAN CHANCER,
NORWICH DUFF, RAY HASSETT,
BRIGITTE KAHN, BURNELL TUCKER

PRODUCTION STAFF

Directed by IRVIN KERSHNER
Produced by GARY KURTZ
Screenplay by LEIGH BRACKETT and
LAWRENCE KASDAN
Story by GEORGE LUCAS
Executive Producer GEORGE LUCAS
Production Designer NORMAN REYNOLDS
Director
of Photography PETER SUSCHITZKY, B.S.C.
Edited by PAUL HIRSCH, A.C.B.
Special Visual Effects BRIAN JOHNSON,
RICHARD EDLUND
Associate Producers ROBERT WATTS,
JAMES BLOOM
Music by JOHN WILLIAMS
Performed by the London Symphony Orchestra
Design Consultant and
Conceptual Artist RALPH McQUARRIE
Art Directors LESLIE DILLEY,
HARRY LANGE, ALAN TOMKINS
Set Decorator MICHAEL FORD
Construction Manager BILL WELCH
Assistant Art Directors MICHAEL LAMONT,
FRED HOLE
Sketch Artist IVOR BEDDOES

ONCE UPON A GALAXY

DraftsmenTED AMBROSE, MICHAEL BOONE,
REG BREAM, STEVE COOPER,
RICHARD DAWKING
ModellersFRED EVANS, ALLAN MOSS,
JAN STEVENS
Chief BuyerEDWARD RODRIGO
Construction StoremanDAVE MIDDLETON

Operating Cameramen KELVIN PIKE,
DAVID GARFATH
Assistant CameramenMAURICE ARNOLD,
CHRIS TANNER
Second Assistant CameramenPETER ROBINSON,
MADELYN MOST
Dolly GripsDENNIS LEWIS, BRIAN OSBORN
Matte Photography Consultant ..STANLEY SAYER, B.S.C.
GafferLAURIE SHANE
Rigging GafferJOHN CLARK
Lighting Equipment and Crew from Lee Electric

Make-up and

Special Creature Design ... STUART FREEBORN
Chief Make-up ArtistGRAHAM FREEBORN
Make-up ArtistsKAY FREEBORN, NICK MALEY
Chief HairdresserBARBARA RITCHIE
Yoda FabricationWENDY MIDENER

Costume Designer JOHN MOLLO
Wardrobe SupervisorTINY NICHOLLS
Wardrobe MistressEILEEN SULLIVAN

Property Master FRANK BRUTON
Property SupervisorCHARLES TORBETT
Property Dressing SupervisorJOE DIPPLE
Head CarpenterGEORGE GUNNING
Head PlastererBERT RODWELL
Head RiggerRED LAWRENCE

Sound Design and Supervising

Sound Effects EditorBEN BURTT
Sound EditorsRICHARD BURROW,
TERESA ECKTON, BONNIE KOEHLER

Production Sound PETER SUTTON
Sound Boom OperatorDON WORTHAM
Production MaintenanceRON BUTCHER

Re-Recording BILL VARNEY,
STEVE MASLOW, GREGG LANDAKER

Music Recording	ERIC TOMLINSON
Orchestrations	HERBERT W. SPENCER
Supervising	
Music Editor	KENNETH WANNBERG
Assistant Film Editors	DUWAYNE DUNHAM, PHIL SANDERSON, BARBARA ELLIS, STEVE STARKEY, PAUL TOMLINSON
Dialogue Editors	CURT SCHULKEY, LESLIE SHATZ, JOANNE D'ANTONIO
Optical Coordinator	ROBERTA FRIEDMAN
Assistant Sound Editors	JOHN BENSON, JOANNA CAPPUCCILLI, KEN FISCHER, CRAIG JAEGER, NANCY JENCKS, LAUREL LADEVICH
Foley Editors	ROBERT RUTLEDGE, SCOTT HECKER
Foley Assistants	EDWARD M. STEIDELE, JOHN ROESH
Sound Effects Recording	RANDY THOM
Recording Technicians	GARY SUMMERS, HOWIE, KEVIN O'CONNELL
Production Supervisor	BRUCE SHARMAN
Assistant Production Manager	PATRICIA CARR
Production Coordinator	MIKI HERMAN
First Assistant Director	DAVID TOMBLIN
Second Assistant Directors	STEVE LANNING, ROY BUTTON
Location Manager	PHILIP KOHLER
Continuity	KAY RAWLINGS, PAMELA MANN
Casting	IRENE LAMB, TERRY LIEBLING, BOB EDMISTON
Assistant to Producer	BUNNY ALSUP
Assistant to Director	DEBBIE SHAW
Assistant to Executive Producer	JANE BAY
Production Assistants	BARBARA HARLEY, NICK LAWS, CHARLES WESSLER
Stunt Coordinator	PETER DIAMOND
Stunt Doubles	BOB ANDERSON, COLIN SKEAPING
Production Accountant	RON PHIPPS
Assistant Accountant	MICHAEL LARKINS
Set Cost Controller	KEN GORDON
Location Accountant	RON COOK
Still Photographer	GEORGE WHITEAR
Unit Publicist	ALAN ARNOLD
Assistant Publicist	KIRSTEN WING

STUDIO SECOND UNIT

Directors HARLEY COKLISS, JOHN BARRY
Director of Photography CHRIS MENGES
Assistant Director DOMINIC FULFORD
Second Assistant Director .. ANDREW MONTGOMERY

LOCATION SECOND UNIT

DirectorPETER MacDONALD
Director of PhotographyGEOFF GLOVER
Operating CameramanBOB SMITH
Assistant CameramenJOHN CAMPBELL,
MIKE BREWSTER
Second Assistant CameramenJOHN KEEN,
GREG DUPRE
Dolly GripFRANK BATT
Production ManagerSVEIN JOHANSEN
Assistant DirectorsBILL WESTLEY, OLA SOLUM

PRODUCTION AND MECHANICAL EFFECTS UNIT

Mechanical Effects Supervision NICK ALLDER
Location Unit Supervisor ALLAN BRYCE
Senior Effects Technicians NEIL SWAN,
DAVE WATKINS
Robot Fabrication and Supervision ANDREW KELLY,
RON HONE
Effects Technicians PHIL KNOWLES,
BARRY WHITROD, MARTIN GANT,
BRIAN EKE, GUY HUDSON,
DENNIS LOWE
Effects Engineering ROGER NICHOLLS,
STEVE LLOYD
Electrical Engineer JOHN HATT
Electronics Consultant ROB DICKINSON
Model Construction JOHN PAKENHAM
Effects Assistants ALAN POOLE, DIGBY MILNER,
ROBERT McLAREN
Effects Secretary GILL CASE

MINIATURE AND OPTICAL EFFECTS UNIT

Effects Director
of Photography **DENNIS MUREN**
Effects Cameramen **KEN RALSTON,**
JIM VEILLEUX
Camera Operators **DON DOW, BILL NEIL**

ONCE UPON A GALAXY

Assistant CameramenSELWYN EDDY,
JODY WESTHEIMER, RICK FICHTER,
CLINT PALMER, MICHAEL McALISTER,
PAUL HUSTON, RICHARD FISH,
CHRIS ANDERSON

Optical Photography

Supervisor BRUCE NICHOLSON
Optical Printer OperatorsDAVID BERRY,
KENNETH SMITH, DONALD CLARK
Optical Line-upWARREN FRANKLIN,
MARK VARGO, PETER AMUNDSON,
LORING DOYLE, THOMAS ROSSETER,
TAM PILLSBURY, JAMES LIM
Optical CoordinatorLAURIE VERMONT
Laboratory TechniciansTIM GEIDEMAN,
DUNCAN MYERS, ED JONES

Art Director—Visual Effects JOE JOHNSTON
Assistant Art DirectorNILO RODIS-JAMERO

Stop Motion Animation JON BERG,
PHIL TIPPETT
Stop Motion TechniciansTOM ST. AMAND,
DOUG BESWICK

Matte Painting

Supervisor HARRISON ELLENSHAW
Matte ArtistsRALPH McQUARRIE,
MICHAEL PANGRAZIO
Matte PhotographyNEIL KREPELA
Additional Matte PhotographyMICHAEL LAWLER
Matte Photography AssistantsCRAIG BARRON,
ROBERT ELSWIT

Chief Model Maker LORNE PETERSON
Modelshop ForemanSTEVE GAWLEY
Model Makers PAUL HUSTON, TOM RUDDUCK,
MICHAEL FULMER, SAMUEL ZOLLTHEIS,
CHARLES BAILEY, EASE OWYEUNG,
SCOTT MARSHALL, MARC THORPE,
WESLEY SEEDS, DAVE CARSON,
ROB GEMMEL, PAT McCLUNG

Animation and Rotoscope

Supervisor PETER KURAN

ONCE UPON A GALAXY

AnimatorsSAMUEL COMSTOCK,
GARRY WALLER, JOHN VAN VLIET,
RICK TAYLOR, KIM KNOWLTON,
CHRIS CASADY, NINA SAXON,
DIANA WILSON

Visual Effects

Editorial Supervisor CONRAD BUFF
Effects EditorMICHAEL KELLY
Assistant Effects EditorsARTHUR REPOLA,
HOWARD STEIN
Apprentice EditorJON THALER

Production AdministratorDICK GALLEGLY
Production SecretaryPATRICIA BLAU
Production AssociateTHOMAS BROWN
Production AccountantRAY SCALICE
Assistant AccountantsGLENN PHILLIPS,
PAM TRAAS, LAURA CROCKETT
Production AssistantJENNY OZNOWICZ
TransportationROBERT MARTIN
Still PhotographerTERRY CHOSTNER
Lab AssistantROBERTO McGRATH

Electronics Systems DesignerJERRY JEFFRESS
Systems ProgrammingKRIS BROWN
Electronic EngineersLHARY MEYER,
MIKE MacKENZIE, GARY LEO

Special Project CoordinatorSTUART ZIFF
Equipment Engineering SupervisorGENE WHITEMAN
Design EngineerMIKE BOLLES
MachinistsUDO PAMPEL, GREG BEAUMONTE
DraftsmanED TENNLER
Special ProjectsGARY PLATEK
Supervising Stage TechnicianT.E. MOEHNKE
Stage TechniciansWILLIAM BECK,
BOBBY FINLEY, LEO LOVERRO,
EDWARD HIRSH, DICK DOVA, ED BREED

Miniature PyrotechnicsJOSEPH VISKOCIL,
DAVE PIER, THAINE MORRIS

Optical Printer Component Manufacturer
GEORGE RANDLE CO.

Camera and Movement DesignJIM BEAUMONTE
Special Optics DesignerDAVID GRAFTON
Special Optics FabricationJ.L. WOOD OPTICAL
SYSTEMS

Optical Printer Component Engineering FRIES ENGINEERING
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Color Timer ED LEMKE
Negative Cutting ROBERT HART, DARRELL HIXSON
Dolby Consultant DON DIGIROLAMO
Additional Optical Effects VAN DER VEER PHOTO
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Assistant—Margaret Herron

Helicopter Supplied by Dollar Air Services Limited
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Norway, and at EMI-Elstree Studios, Borehamwood,
England

Music Recorded at Anvil Studios, Denham, England

Re-Recording at Samuel Goldwyn Studios,
Los Angeles, California

Filmed in Panavision® Color by Rank Film
Laboratories® Prints by Deluxe®

Recorded in  DOLBY SYSTEM™

Special Visual Effects Produced at Industrial Light and
Magic, Marin County, California

Visual Effects Filmed in Vista® Vision Lenses by Nikon®

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About the Author

Before he entered films Alan Arnold was a journalist in London where he was born, raised, and educated. He served the British government as a press officer in Egypt and in the U.S.A.

For four years he was a foreign correspondent in New York. Film locations and journalism have taken him to thirty other countries.

Arnold's books include *The Incredible Sarah, Valentino*, and *How to Visit America*, which a critic described as "one of the best introductions to [America's] customs, characteristics, and history ever written."

Over the years Arnold has worked on some forty films with stars of past and present, from Monroe to Minnelli, Dietrich to Michael Caine, and with many distinguished directors.

Work beyond the film business brought him into touch with exceptional people in other fields, including Eleanor Roosevelt, Lillian Hellman, and Edward R. Murrow, to name three he respected and admired for their courage and integrity.

"They gave me perspective," he says. "They taught me that success isn't tangible, though in show business some people make the mistake of believing that it is."

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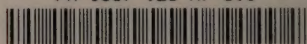
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